June 20, 1988

THE NEW YORKER

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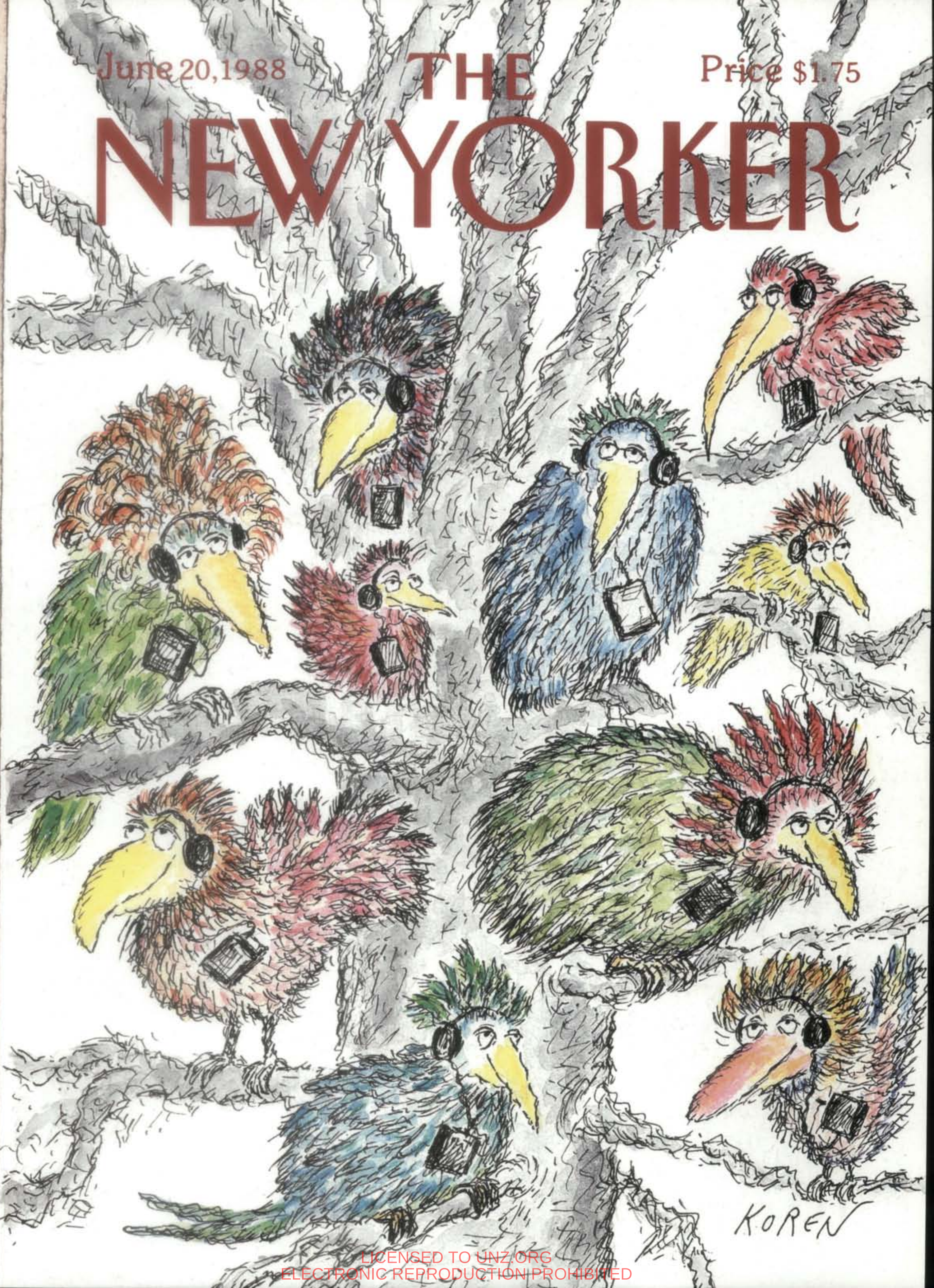

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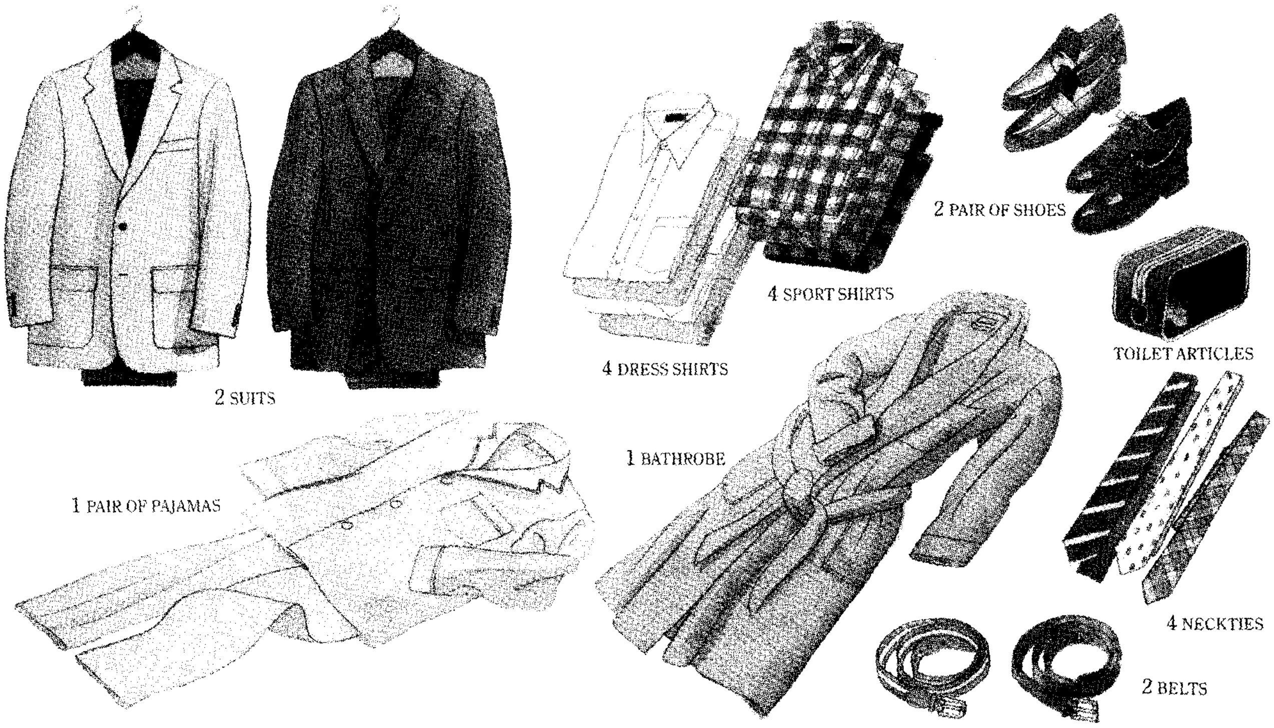

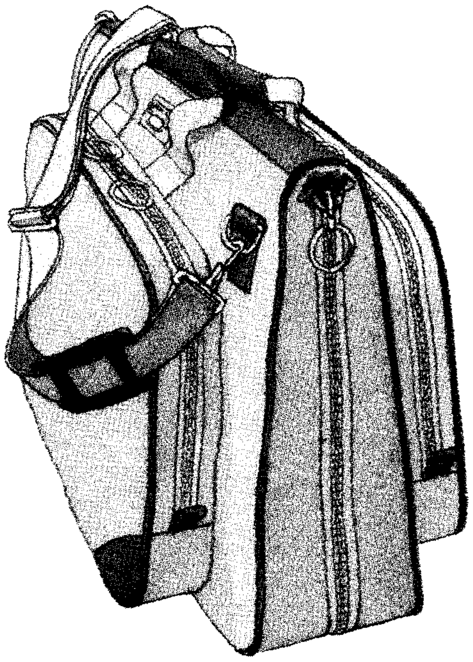

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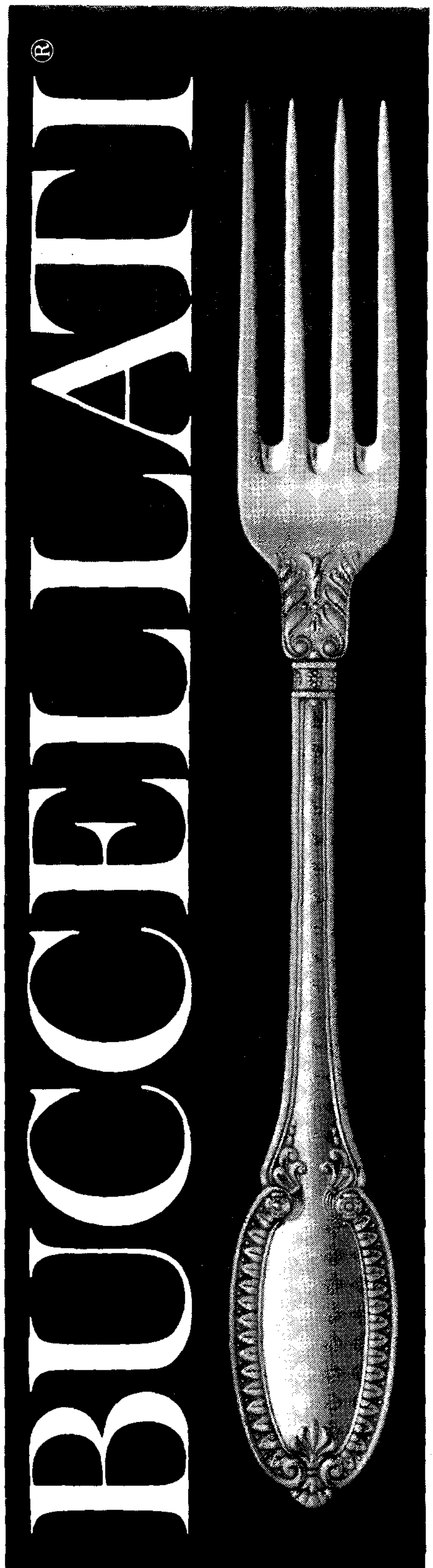

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

Anything Goes—Under the clever direction of Jerry Zaks, this exuberant revival is primarily a celebration of Cole Porter himself. The libretto, as revised from the original by Timothy Crouse and John Weidman, is consistently entertaining. The company, which includes Bill McCutcheon, Howard McGillin, Patti LuPone, Anthony Heald, and Kathleen Mahony-Bennett, does more than justice to the words and score. (Reviewed in our issue of 11/2/87.) (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Burn This—A play by Lanford Wilson, with Eric Roberts as a foulmouthed restaurant owner who woos and wins his dead brother's dancing partner. With Lisa Emery, Jonathan Hogan, and Lou Liberatore. Marshall W. Mason was the director, and the distinguished setting was designed by John Lee Beatty and lighted by Dennis Parichy. (10/26/87) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Chess—This noisy rock musical is a British import about an international chess match between a bad-tempered American and a more equable Russian, who falls in love with the American's beautiful second. There is a lot of plot, but beyond the hyperactivity and the electronic blare there is also life on the stage. Judy Kuhn, David Carroll, and Philip Casnoff give splendid performances in the leading roles. Trevor Nunn directed the American company. (5/9/88) (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Dandy Dick—An unforgivable production—muddled and campy—of a farce that might well have been funny in 1888, when Sir Arthur Wing Pinero wrote it. (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 2. Closes Sunday, June 26.)

First Class—A play by Candido Tirado. Performances in English Wednesdays through Fridays at 8, and in Spanish Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30 and 8. (Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 354-1293. Closes Sunday, June 26.)

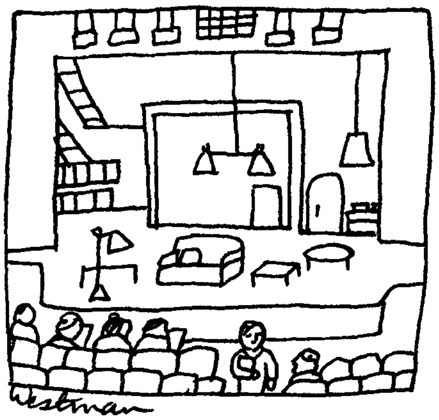
Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune—Carol Kane and Bruce Weitz in Terrence McNally's enchanting comedy about sex and the sudden onset of love in an apartment on Tenth Avenue in the Fifties. Directed by Paul Benedict. (11/9/87) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Godspell—A revival of the 1971 musical by Stephen Schwartz and John-Michael Tebelak. (Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Hamlet—Shakespeare's tragedy, as directed by Ingmar Bergman. In Swedish, with no English translation. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Tuesday through Thursday, June 14-16, at 8.)

Into the Woods—The new musical by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine is an attempt to show what lurks beneath the surface of conventional fairy tales. The amusing first half is like a musical staging of Bruno Bettelheim's "The Uses of Enchantment." The rather nasty second half degenerates into cheap philosophy. The costumes (by Ann Hould-Ward) and sets (by Tony Straiges) are pretty to look at, and the songs are beautiful or funny—sometimes both. The cast, which includes Phylicia Rashād and Joanna Gleason, is directed by Mr. Lapine. (11/16/87) (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Joe Turner's Come and Gone—August Wilson's stirring play is set in a Pittsburgh boarding house in 1911. Its principal story is of a man who was captured and enslaved by the white plantation owner Joe Turner and who has been searching for his lost wife ever since he was set free. Delroy Lindo gives a strong performance in the role, sharing the honors with Ed Hall, who, as a benign healer, is the presiding spirit of the show. With Mel Winkler and L. Scott Caldwell, among other good actors. Lloyd Richards was the excellent director. (4/11/88) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Sundays at 3, and Saturdays at 2.)



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Macbeth—The much-talked-about vehicle for Christopher Plummer and Glenda Jackson is not, as one might have been led to expect from the adverse publicity, giggle-makingly bad, merely uniformly and numbingly boring. No one (least of all Shakespeare) is well served by the production, which received "original direction" from Kenneth Frankel, "additional direction" from Zoe Caldwell, and uncredited direction from Robin Phillips. (5/9/88) (Mark Hellinger, 237 W. 51st St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, July 3.)

M. Butterfly—David Henry Hwang's funny, mysterious, and often beautiful play is based on an actual case: in 1964, a French diplomat took as his mistress a star of the Beijing Opera, and some twenty years later—when they were both charged with being spies—discovered that "she" was a he. John Lithgow, in the leading role, gives an exceptional performance, and so does B. D. Wong as his lover. Lori Tan Chinn, George N. Martin, and Rose Gregorio give them sound support. (4/4/88) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Negro Ensemble Company—Presenting the Crossroads Theatre production of **WEST MEMPHIS MOJO**, a play by Martin Jones. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-8545. Wednesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 8:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 3 and Sundays at 2:30.)

Oil City Symphony—Mike Craver, Mark Hardwick, Debra Monk, and Mary Murfitt, gifted and sophisticated singers and instrumentalists, appear as a quartet of dedicated hicks reuniting at their small-town high school in this very funny, very musical musical. Mr. Hardwick and Miss Monk, by the way, are alumni of "Pump Boys and Dinettes" of blessed memory. (1/18/88) (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

The Phantom of the Opera—The much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets (by Maria Björnson) everything about the show is negligible, including the overhyped performance of Michael Crawford in the title role. (2/8/88) (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Right Behind the Flag—A play by Kevin Heelan. Preview Tuesday, June 14. Opens Wednesday, June 15. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

The Road to Mecca—An absorbing, if somewhat elusive, play by the South African dramatist Athol Fugard, about an aging woman sculptor who is mystical and independent, and who resists the attempts of a local minister to persuade her to go into an old-people's home. The performances, by Yvonne Bryceland, Mr. Fugard himself, and Amy Irving, as a young disciple of the sculptor, are impeccable. Mr. Fugard directed. (4/25/88) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Romance/Romance—A pair of charming one-act musicals that have travelled successfully from Off to Broadway. Scott Bakula and Alison Fraser are as romantic as required in the leading roles. Barry Harman wrote the clever books and lyrics, and Keith Herrmann wrote the engaging scores. Mr. Harman directed. (5/16/88) (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Sarafina!—This South African musical, an explosion of talent, was conceived, written, and directed by Mbongeni Ngema, who also, with Hugh Masekela, composed and arranged the score. It is a show about a show that is put on by a brave group of high-school students in Soweto, and that dramatizes the events in their lives. The events are bleak, but the spirits are blazing, and the acting, dancing, and singing, to a local form of popular music called Mbaqanga, are a wonder. (11/9/87) (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

A Shayna Maidel—A well-wrought and deeply moving play by Barbara Lebow about a Polish-Jewish family torn apart by the events of the Hitler era. The production is beautifully directed by Mary B. Robinson. The year 1946 is perfectly evoked by William Barclay's setting. Bring lots of Kleenex to this one, but expect to leave uplifted. (11/30/87) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Speed-the-Plow—David Mamet's satire on Hollywood is just as scathing, just as acute as his "Glengarry Glen Ross," and even funnier, if that can be imagined. Under Gregory Mosher, Joe Mantegna and Ron Silver give stunning performances as a pair of sleazy producers, and Madonna does well, too, as a wide-eyed secretary. (5/16/88) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6277. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Spoils of War—Michael Weller's new play about the efforts of a prep-school boy to reunite his divorced parents is tedious, but the production, directed by Austin Pendleton, is as lively as possible under the circumstances. Kate Nelligan is marvellous as the boy's mother. (6/6/88) (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103. Tuesdays, except June 14, through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3. Special performances Wednesday, June 15, at 2, and Monday, June 20, at 8. Closes Sunday, June 26.)

Tamara—A participatory theatrical encounter, in which the audience must literally follow the characters as they move from room to room in what is supposed to be Gabriele D'Annunzio's villa. (7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. 239-6215. Mondays

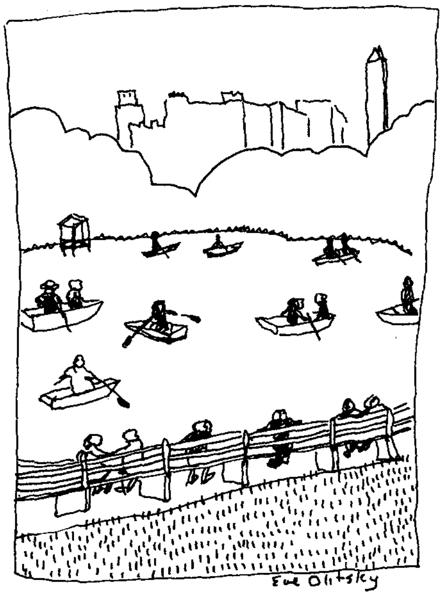
GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

through Wednesdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Special performances Friday, June 17, at 9, and Saturday, June 18, at 10. The matinée schedule varies; please call ahead.)

Three Ways Home—S. Epatha Merkerson is a welfare mother; Malcolm-Jamal Warner is her unmanageable sixteen-year-old son; and Mary McDonnell is a volunteer social worker assigned to her case. All of them are splendid. The play, by Casey Kurtti, much of it in monologues, is comic and sad and never dull. (6/6/88) (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. Tuesdays, except June 21, through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3. Special benefit performance Tuesday, June 21, at 7; for information about tickets, call 239-0058.)

A Walk in the Woods—Lee Blessing's absorbing play is set near Geneva and consists entirely of the conversations, over a year or so, of an American and a Soviet diplomat who have gone there to negotiate an arms treaty. No agreement is reached, but a friendship grows and deepens. Under the direction of Des McAnuff, Sam Waterston and Robert Prosky give distinguished performances. (3/14/88) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Long Runs—**BROADWAY BOUND:** In the third of his trilogy of autobiographical plays, Neil Simon takes us from Brooklyn to Manhattan, from ignominy to the promise of fame. Directed by Gene Saks. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **CATS:** Ezra Pound nicknamed T. S. Eliot "Old Possum," and under that name Eliot wrote a collection of poems about cats, and now the cats are on display on Broadway, with music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, scenery and costumes by John Napier, and direction by Trevor Nunn. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **DRIVING MISS DAISY:** Frances Sternhagen and Earle Hyman star in Alfred Uhry's play, which tells of the growing attachment of a cranky old woman in Atlanta to her black chauffeur. Directed by Ron Lagomarsino. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** This longest of long runs recently had its twenty-eighth birthday. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **FENCES:** Billy Dee Williams has the lead in August Wilson's powerful play. Lloyd Richards directed. (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **42ND STREET:** Once upon a time there was a silly-wonderful Warner Brothers musical about a young hoofer who goes on in place of a disabled star and herself becomes a star overnight. The legitimate musical that has been fashioned from the movie musical is just as silly but by no means as wonderful. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 398-0280. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8:15. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:15, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **ME AND MY GIRL:** A fifty-year-old British musical starring Jim Dale. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Tim Shew and Anthony Crivello star in the musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel, but the real standouts of the production are the settings, by John Napier, and the lighting, by David Hersey. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **STARLIGHT EXPRESS:** A bore on roller skates. (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **STEEL MAGNOLIAS:** This first play by Robert Harling is set in a beauty shop in a small town in Louisiana, and consists mainly of the often amusing, wisecracking chatter of the proprietress, her assistant, and four steady customers. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 6 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)



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MISCELLANY

Le Cirque du Soleil—A circus from Montreal, in its first appearance here. (Battery Park City. Tuesday through Thursday, June 14-16, at 8; Friday, June 17, at 5:30 and 9; Saturday, June 18, at 4:30 and 8; and Sunday, June 19, at 1 and 4:30. For information about tickets, call 344-5910.)

Without You I'm Nothing—Sandra Bernhard in a one-woman show. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477. Wednesdays and Thursdays at 8; Fridays and Saturdays at 8 and 10:30; and Sundays at 5:30 and 9.)

Jackie Mason's "The World According to Me!"—A return engagement of the comedian's one-man show. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 719-4099. Tuesdays, except June 21, through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Sundays at 3 and Wednesday, June 22, at 2.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Presenting Gilbert and Sullivan's **IOLANTHE.** (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Wednesday at 2 and Saturday and Sunday at 3:30. Closes Sunday, June 19.)

Ten Percent Revue—A musical revue by Tom Wilson Weinberg about gay life. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 4.)

THE FESTIVAL

(This month-long celebration, formally called the First New York International Festival of the Arts, runs through July 11. Events take place all over the city, and artists come from all over the world. For recorded information about performances, call 587-1111, or, outside New York, 1-800 782-4396; for reservations, call the individual box offices.)

THEATRE

Circle Repertory Company—A play by Jim Leonard, **V & V ONLY,** directed by Marshall W. Mason. (99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

The Death of García Lorca—José Antonio Riál's play about the last three days in the life of the Spanish writer. Directed by Carlos Giménez and translated, from the Spanish, by Julio Marzán. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Friday through Sunday, June 17-19, and Tuesday and Wednesday, June 21-22, at 8. Matinées Saturday and Sunday, June 18-19, at 3.)

Gate Theatre Dublin—Presenting two plays. **I'LL GO ON:** The Beckett novels "Molloy," "Malone Dies," and "The Unnameable," adapted by Jerry Dukes and Barry McGovern. Mr. McGovern is the only performer; Colm O Briain directed. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Wednesday, June 22, at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Special performance Wednesday, June 22, at 6:30.) . . . **JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK:** Donal McCann is the drunken, outrageous Paycock in Sean O'Casey's 1924 play. (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays, except June 21, through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2. Special performance Tuesday, June 21, at 6:30. Closes Saturday, July 2.)

Green Card—A new play written and directed by JoAnne Akalaitis, presented by the Mark Taper Forum of Los Angeles. (Joyce, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Mondays through Thursdays at 8; Fridays at 5 and 9; and Saturdays at 7. Closes Saturday, June 25.)

Miracolo d'Amore—A theatre piece for fifteen dancers and singers, conceived and directed by Martha Clarke, with music by Richard Peaslee. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

The Night of the Iguana—A revival of Tennessee Williams' 1961 play, directed by Theodore Mann. With Jane Alexander, Pamela Payton-Wright, Nicolas Surovy, and Maria Tucci. Performances begin Friday, June 17. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

O'Neill Centennial Celebration—Two plays in repertory. **LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT:** Colleen Dewhurst and Jason Robards in O'Neill's autobiographical tragedy. Directed by José Quintero. (Monday, June 13, at 8; Tuesday, June 14, at 6; and Saturday, June 18, and Monday and Tuesday, June 20-21, at 8.) . . . **AH, WILDERNESS!:** Miss Dewhurst and Mr. Robards in what the playwright called the story of "a boyhood I never had." Arvin Brown directed. (Wednesday through Friday, June 15-17, at 8; Saturday, June 18, at 2; and Wednesday, June 22, at 2 and 8.) (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 246-0102.)

Also Playing—**CRICOT 2:** An avant-garde theatre group from Poland, presenting "I Shall Never Return," in Polish. (La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, June 26.) . . . **ENSEMBLE STUDIO THEATRE:** A one-act-play marathon. Through Monday, June 20: "Neptune's Hips," by Richard Greenberg; "Buster B and Olivia," by Shirley Kaplan; "Something About Baseball," by Quincy Long; and "A Poster of the Cosmos," by Lanford Wilson. . . . ¶ Starting Wednesday, June 22: "Juliet," by Romulus Linney; "Door to Cuba," by James Ryan; "Human Gravity," by Stuart Spencer; and "Mango Tea," by Paul Weitz. (549 W. 52nd St. 247-3405. Mondays and Wednesdays through Fridays at 7:30; Saturdays at 9; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 5 and Sundays at 3.) . . . **GARDZIENICE THEATRE ASSOCIATION:** Another avant-garde troupe from Poland, in "Avvakum" and "Gathering." Both works are in Polish. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. 662-2133. Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Friday, June 17, at 9; Friday, June 17, at 10. Closes Saturday, June 25.) . . . **HAWORTH SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL:** Presenting the London Stage Company's production of Jean Genet's 1949 play "Deathwatch," which has been integrated with " 'Adame Miroir," a ballet for which Genet wrote the scenario. With three dancers from the Dance Theatre of Harlem. (Davis Hall, City College, Convent Ave. at 134th St. 690-4100. Tuesday through Friday, June 14-17, and Monday through Wednesday, June 20-22, at 8; Saturday, June 18, at 7; and Sunday, June 19, at 3. Closes Tuesday, June 28.) . . . **INTAR:** Two one-act musicals (both with a score by Fernando Rivas) set in New York—one in the thirties, the other in 1999. (420 W. 42nd St. 465-1761. Wednesdays through Sundays at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.) . . . **MABOU MINES:** In "Flow My Tears, the Policeman Said," a work taken from a science-fiction novel by Philip K. Dick. (Tisch School of the Arts Theatre, New York University, 721 Broadway. Nightly, except Mondays and Tuesday, June 14, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2. For information about tickets, call 869-3530.) . . . **PAN ASIAN REPERTORY THEATRE:** Presenting Momoko Iko's "Boutique Living & Disposable Icons." (Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry Street. 245-2660. Tuesday, June 21, at 7, and Wednesday, June 22, at 8.) . . . **STAGES THEATRE:** Three plays (one in Spanish) by the Argentine playwright-actor-psychiatrist Eduardo Pavlovsky. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Nightly, except Tuesdays, at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2. Closes Monday, June 27.) . . . **TENKEI GEKIJO:** A Japanese company in "Water Station," Shogo Ohta's work without words for twenty actors and a water faucet. (Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. 832-1155. Sunday, June 19, at 3, and Monday through Wednesday, June 20-22, at 8.). . . **THEATRE FOR THE NEW CITY:** Bob Morris's play "A Circle," about two American artists hiding from New York in a small town in Italy. (155 First Ave., at 10th St. 254-1109. Monday, June 20, and Wednesday, June 22, at 8.) . . . **UBU REPERTORY THEATRE:** "You Have Come Back," a play by Fatima Gallaire-Bourega about women and Islam. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 279-4200. Tuesday and Wednesday, June 21-22, at 8. Closes Saturday, July 2.) . . . **VUSISIZWE PLAYERS:** A South African ensemble in "You Strike the Woman, You Strike the Rock." (Apple Corps Theatre, 336 W. 20th St. 242-4204. Friday and Saturday, June 17-18, and Tuesday and Wednesday, June 21-22, at 8; and Sunday, June 19, at 7. Matinées Saturday and Sunday, June 18-19, at 3. Closes Saturday, June 25.)

DANCE

AMERICAN BALLROOM THEATRE—In "Hernando's Hideaway" (première), "Two Hearts in ¾ Time," and "Presley Pieces." (Triplex, 199 Chambers St. 618-1980. Wednesday, June 22, at 8. Through Saturday, June 25.)

FRANKFURT BALLET—A week-long engagement, with two alternating programs. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989. Tuesday, June 14, at 7:30; Wednesday through Friday, June 15-17, at 8; Saturday, June 18, at 2 and 8; and Sunday, June 19, at 3.)

SUZUSHI HANAYAGI AND KATSUHIRO YAMAGUCHI—A collaborative dance-video production. (Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St. 517-2742. Wednesday through Friday, June 15-17, at 8.)

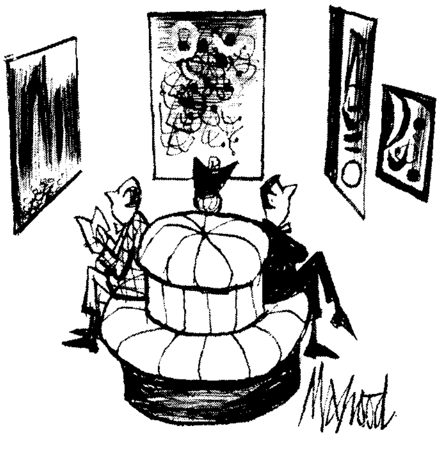
DANIEL LARRIEU AND ASTRAKAN—In "Waterproof," a dance piece performed in and around a swimming pool. Esther Williams will not be present. (Columbia University Swimming Pool, Broadway at 117th St. Wednesday through Friday, June 22-24, at 9:30. For information about tickets, call 924-0077.)

MUSIC

ORCHESTRAS, CHORUSES, AND AN OPERA—NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC: Monday, June 13, at 8: Zubin Mehta conducting a Zwilich-Bartók-Stravinsky program, with Itzhak Perlman, violin. . . . Thursday, June 16, at 8: Gennady Rozhdestvensky conducting a Schnittke-Prokofiev-Shostakovich program, with Viktoria Postnikova, piano. . . . Saturday, June 18, at 8: Pierre Boulez conducting a Berio-Boulez-Debussy program, with the New Swingle Singers. (Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424.) . . . **ENSEMBLE INTERCONTEMPORAIN:** Pierre Boulez conducting three concerts of twentieth-century music which include some of his own compositions. Wednesday, June 15, at 7: A Stravinsky-Donatoni-Boulez program. (Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. 708-9400.) . . . ¶ Thursday, June 16, at 8: Works by Edison Denisov, Marc-André Dalbavie, Anton Webern, and Olivier Messiaen. . . . Friday, June 17, at 8: Music by Tristan Murial, Mr. Boulez, and Arnold Schoenberg. (Majestic Theatre, 651 Fulton St., about a block east of Flatbush Ave., Brooklyn. 1-718 636-4100.) . . . **PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA:** Yuri Temirkanov conducting. Wednesday, June 15, at 8: With André Watts, piano, in a Britten-Shostakovich-Rachmaninoff program. . . . Friday, June 17, at 8: With Misha Dichter, piano, in works by Rimsky-Korsakov, Rachmaninoff, and Sibelius. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800.) . . . **HÄGERSTENS MOTETTKÖR:** A forty-five-member Swedish chorus, directed by Ingemar Månsson, singing twentieth-century works. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. 662-2133. Saturday, June 18, and Monday, June 20, at 7.) . . . **NEW YORK CHORAL SOCIETY:** John Daly Goodwin directing the North American première of "Misa por la Paz y la Justicia," by the Argentine composer Ariel Ramírez, with Mr. Ramírez on harpsichord; and "Missa Luba," an African folk mass by Guido Haazen. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Tuesday, June 21, at 8.) . . . **"PUNCH AND JUDY":** A concert version of Harrison Birtwistle's opera, with Rhonda Kess conducting members of the Brooklyn Philharmonic and guest soloists. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Wednesday, June 22, at 8.)

RECITALS—JUILLIARD STRING QUARTET: Playing works by Schuller, Babbitt, and Janáček. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Tuesday, June 14, at 8.) . . . **CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER:** A series of four concerts tracing compositional paths from 1900 to the present in chronological order. Tuesday, June 14, at 8: Ravel, Ives, Berg, and Stravinsky. . . . Thursday, June 16, at 8: Strauss, Webern, Harris, and Bartók. . . . Sunday, June 19, at 8: Schoenberg, Carter, Barber, and Shostakovich. . . . Tuesday, June 21, at 8: Rorem, Wuorinen, and Schuller. (Alice Tully Hall. 362-1911.) . . . **NEW YORK CHAMBER SYMPHONY:** Krzysztof Penderecki conducts a program of his own works. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Sunday, June 19, at 3.) . . . **ROBERT WHITE:** Tenor, in two concerts of twentieth-century songs. With Samuel Sanders, piano, and Lisa Hansen, flute. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Saturday, June 18, at 8, and Sunday, June 19, at 4.) . . . **ORFORD STRING QUARTET:** Playing the première of William Schuman's "Quartet," and works by Prokofiev and Murray Schafer. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Tuesday, June 21, at 8.)

POP—ASHA BHOSLE: A superstar female vocalist from India. (Felt Forum, Madison Square Garden. 563-8300. Friday and Saturday, June 17-18, at 8.) . . . **AMERICAN TAP DANCE ORCHESTRA:** With the Persuasions and Lenny Pickett, in a tap and soul extravaganza. (Central Park Band Shell, mid-Park at 72nd St. Friday, June 17, at 8:30. No tickets necessary.) . . . **PETER OSTROUSHKO & THE MANDO BOYS:** And John Fahey, picking and strumming away the afternoon. (Central Park Band Shell. Saturday, June 18, at 3. No tickets necessary.) . . . **CASSIBER:** A European art-rock band, in its American début. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. Saturday and Sunday, June 18-19, at 8:30.) . . . **"THE AMERICAN POPULAR SONG: FROM BROADWAY TO HOLLYWOOD":** Composers and lyricists (including Sammy Cahn, Cy Coleman, Jule Styne, and Marilyn and Alan Bergman) performing their own songs in a concert presented by the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP). Steve Allen is the master of ceremonies. (Marquis Theatre, Broadway at 45th St. Monday, June 20, at 8. For tickets, call 246-0102.)



PERFORMANCE ART

BROOKLYN BRIDGE ANCHORAGE—STATION HOUSE OPERA: "Piranesi in New York," by a London-based group whose members have been known to hang from their heels and fly through skylights. (Tuesday through Saturday, June 14-18, at 8.) . . . **CONTRABAND:** A dance-theatre company from San Francisco, presenting "Oracle." (Wednesday through Saturday, June 22-25, at 8.) (Cadman Plaza and Front St., Brooklyn. For information about tickets, call 619-1955.)

DANCE THEATRE WORKSHOP—RALF RALF: In "The Summit." (Wednesday through Saturday, June 15-18, at 8.) . . . **EVEN ORCHESTRA:** A group of four performance artists from Australia whose instruments include film and sound effects. (Wednesday through Saturday, June 22-25, at 8.) (219 W. 19th St. 924-0077.)

P.S. 122—LIN HIXSON: Heading her dance group Goat Island in "Soldier Child, Tortured Man," a politically minded work about El Salvador. (Thursday through Sunday, June 16-19, at 8.) . . . **LEONARD PITT:** A mime artist, in "Spleenix." (Thursday through Sunday, June 16-19, at 10.) . . . **JOHN FLECK:** In "I Got the He-Be-She-Be's," in which the male and female halves of a character try to fall in love with each other. (Friday through Sunday, June 17-19, at 11:30.) . . . **PAT VAN HEMELRIJCK:** Presenting an unlikely kind of circus—a floor polisher that can pirouette and a vacuum cleaner that can balance a Ping-Pong ball are among the attractions. (Friday through Sunday, June 17-19, at 9.) . . . **IAN SMITH AND ROGER ELY:** Two comic performers from England. (Wednesday and Thursday, June 22-23, at 9.) (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

FILM AND VIDEO

"GREAT MASTERS OF THE PERFORMING ARTS"—The Museum of Broadcasting celebrates personalities of dance and music with television shows from its archives. **DANCE** (June 14-18): George Balanchine programs, Tuesday, June 14, at 12:15, 2:05, 4:30, and 5:30. . . . ¶ Fred Astaire programs, Wednesday, June 15, at 12:15, 1:30, 2:45, and 4. . . . ¶ Agnes de Mille programs, Thursday, June 16, at 12:05, 1:45, and 3:45. . . . ¶ Gene Kelly programs, Friday, June 17, at 12:15, 1:30, 2:45, and 4. . . . ¶ Martha Graham programs, Saturday, June 18, at 12:05, 1:45, and 3:45. . . . **MUSIC** (June 21-25): Benny Goodman programs, Tuesday, June 21, at 12:05, 1:45, 3:45, 5, and 6:15. . . . ¶ Arturo Toscanini programs, Wednesday, June 22, at 12:05, 1:15, 2:30, and 3:45. (1 E. 53rd St. For detailed program and ticket information, call 752-7684.)

NOT TO MENTION

¶ On Thursday, June 16 (Bloomsday), beginning at 8 A.M. and continuing until 1 A.M. Friday, Symphony Space will present readings from Joyce's "Ulysses." With Fionnula Flanagan, Geraldine Fitzgerald, John Shea, Linda Lavin, Joanna Gleason, James Naughton, Donal Donnelly, and many others. (Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400.) . . . ¶ On Sunday and Monday, June 19-20, at 8, the comedian Robert Klein will do his hilarious thing. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

DANCE

NEW YORK CITY BALLET—Tuesday evening, June 14: "Ivesiana," "Piano Pieces," and "Fancy Free." . . . ¶ Wednesday evening, June 15: "Ivesiana," "Allegro Brillante," "Rhapsody

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

DANCE—Cont'd

in Blue," and "Brahms/Handel." . . . ¶ Thursday evening, June 16: "Raymonda Variations," "Orpheus," and "The Concert." . . . ¶ Friday evening, June 17: "Walpurgisnacht Ballet," "Calcium Light Night," "Opus 19/The Dreamer," and "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue." . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, June 18: "Ivesiana," "Piano Pieces," and "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, June 18: "Space," "La Sonnambula," and "Brahms/Handel." . . . ¶ Sunday matinée, June 19: "Raymonda Variations," "Orpheus," and "The Concert." . . . ¶ Sunday evening, June 19: "Gounod Symphony," "Behind the China Dogs," and "Brahms/Handel." . . . ¶ Tuesday evening, June 21: "Glass Pieces," "Orpheus," and "Stars and Stripes." . . . ¶ Wednesday evening, June 22: "Behind the China Dogs," "La Sonnambula," and "Brahms/Handel." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 1. Through Sunday, June 26.)

Royal Danish Ballet—A one-week engagement of two full-length Bournonville works—Tuesday, June 14, at 7:30; Wednesday, June 15, at 2 and 8; and Thursday, June 16, at 8: "Napoli." . . . ¶ Friday, June 17, at 8, and Saturday, June 18, at 2 and 8: "Abdallah." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

Paris Opéra Ballet—Opening performances of a three-week engagement that will run through Saturday, July 9—Tuesday, June 21, at 7:30, and Wednesday, June 22, at 2 and 8: "Swan Lake." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

Mark DeGarmo and Dancers—A program of contemporary dance. (Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, 921 Madison Ave., at 73rd St. Friday and Saturday, June 17-18, at 8. Through Saturday, June 25. For tickets, call 633-8319.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**Steve Ross,** debonair singer-about-town, is in the woody nook known as the Oak Room at nine-fifteen Tuesday through Saturday, June 14-18, concentrating on the proper nouns and risqué verbs in the songs of Cole Porter. Anne Francine, who plays Mrs. Harcourt in the Lincoln Center revival of "Anything Goes," sings those same evenings at eleven-fifteen. Dining.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A sleek cabaret on the edge of Chelsea, near the flower and fur markets. **Mary-Cleere Haran,** a singer who grew up in psychedelic San Francisco dancing to the Stones while secretly preferring the music that Fred and Ginger glided around to, is here at nine Tuesday through Saturday, June 14-18, performing famous works by Porter, Berlin, Gershwin, Mercer. She treats these songs not as holy American music but as expressions of a romantic world that she wanted to inhabit—and that now, for the time it takes her to sing "Embraceable You" or "I Concentrate on You," she does inhabit. In between songs, she's describing herself as a slightly dizzy girl who used to watch "The Loretta Young Show" to pick up pointers on poise and charm. Starting Tuesday, June 21, at nine, **Larry Adler,** self-proclaimed champ of the mouth organ, works with tap dancer **Harold Nicholas** and his show-stopping feet.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A bemirrored jazz club with a piece of neon art on the back wall (the Manhattan skyline and attendant celestial bodies) and with bright clusters of musicians on the dais. A quartet run by **Jimmy Smith,** master of the Hammond B-3 organ and of a smoky-room variety of the blues, will be here Tuesday through Sunday, June 14-19, along with a group led by **Mose Allison,** the Mississippi-born, Long Island-based pianist and singer, whose blues manage to be simultaneously folksy and urbane. **Horace Silver** brings in a quintet on Tuesday, June 21. Music from nine. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Bruce Springsteen played here in 1975 and, eyewitnesses say, just about blew the house down; Tony Bennett sang here in 1981; and Dan Hicks, the toast of the folk-swing circuit, spent a night here in 1987. ("Howdja hear about this?" Hicks asked the audience, a small one.) In between and since, big stars and little stars, people with interesting haircuts and people with no hair have come and gone. **Rodney Crowell,** a pretty fair country singer-songwriter (rocking wing) as well as Rosanne Cash's main squeeze, is here on Monday, June 13. **Tower of Power,** the horn-driven Oakland funk band, performs Thursday through Sunday, June 16-19. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A Village bar that has long featured first-rate piano-bass teams and tireless conversationalists and that now also features Bradley's T-shirts, Bradley's sweatshirts, Bradley's customized coasters, a person to take an admission fee, and a person to seat you and shush you. It's an institution. **Ronnie Mathews,** a Brooklyn-born bop-oriented pianist, works with bassist **Ray Drummond** through Saturday, June 18; trumpeter **Danny Moore** leads a trio on Sunday, June 19. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Carlos I, 432 Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—It's so nice in here—silken woodwork and long tables with pink tablecloths and pink napkins—you might mistake it for a jazz club on a movie set but for the real musicians onstage. **Dorothy Donegan's** flying, tricky hands—mixing Rachmaninoff with boogie-woogie, building great fun houses of sound—are the show here Tuesday through Sunday, June 14-19. She's accompanied by bassist **Arvell Shaw** and drummer **Ray Mosca.** On Mondays, **Hamiet Bluiett,** the baritone voice of the World Saxophone Quartet, leads a big band. Music from nine-thirty. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The pastel uptown spa known as the Café Carlyle is home to **Bobby Short,** a fave rave of the haut monde and much admired in circles less haut, Tuesdays through Saturdays. Sets at ten and midnight. . . . ¶ Over in the Bemelmans Bar, **Barbara Carroll** sings and plays the piano from nine-forty-five Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—The Dalton Gang, a ten-piece Latin-jazz outfit, works out in this belowstairs room Tuesday and Wednesday, June 14-15; light-jazz crooner **Kenny Rankin** sings Thursday through Sunday, June 16-19. Mondays remain in the hands of guitarist **Les Paul.** Music from eight. Dining.

Fortune Garden Pavilion, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—Two nice things not known to be available in the next world—Chinese cooking and American jazz—are here, under a greenhouse roof giving on to some prime midtown airspace. **Adam Makowicz,** the formidable, Tatum-inspired Polish pianist, holds forth Tuesday through Sunday, June 14-19; **Judy Carmichael,** a young, wispy-looking California pianist who plays in the old robust Harlem stride style, comes in with her trio on Tuesday, June 21. Music from nine-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays, and from six on Sundays.

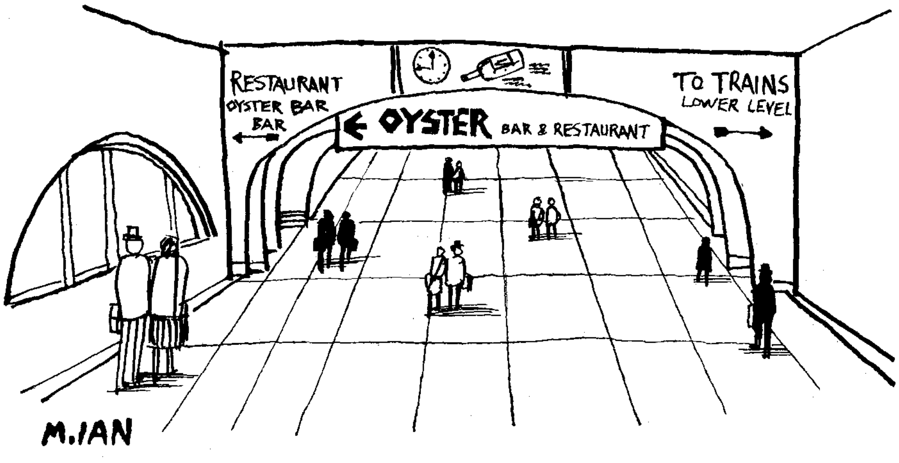
Greene Street, 101 Greene St. (925-2415)—A cathedral-size bar and restaurant. Pianists practice their art in a little grove of palms a half mile or so from the bar. Bring your binoculars. The schedule: Tuesday, June 14, Juliana Kohl; Wednesday, June 15, Lynn Bernstein; Thursday through Saturday, June 16-18, **Andy LaVerne,** with vibraharpist **Joe Locke;** and Tuesday and Wednesday, June 21-22, **Rahn Burton.** Sets begin at seven Tuesdays through Thursdays, and at seven-thirty Fridays and Saturdays. Closed Mondays.

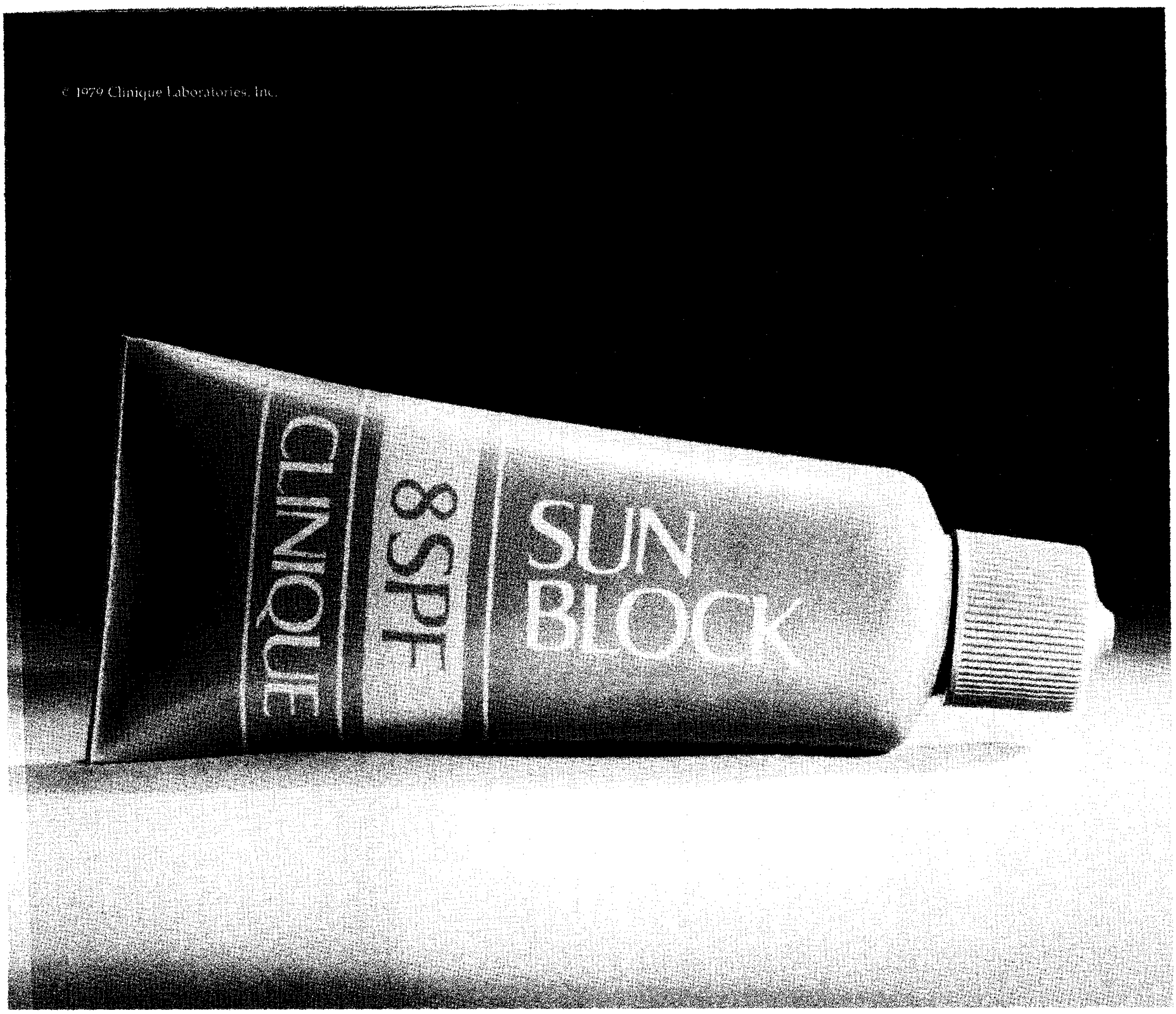
J's, 2581 Broadway, at 97th St. (666-3600)—A room with a view (of Broadway) and with jazz (mostly of the mainstream type). **Dick Hyman,** who has Jelly Roll Morton and James P. Johnson and a library of pop songs at his fingertips, performs Mondays, June 13 and 20. The rest of the lineup: Tuesday, June 14, pianist Andy Tuck; Wednesdays, June 15 and 22, guitarist and singer **Marty Grosz's** trio; Thursday, June 16, guitarist and singer **John Pizzarelli's** trio; Friday, June 17, Finnish drummer **Klaus Suonsaari's** trio; and Saturday, June 18, pianist Mark Soskin's threesome. Music from eight Mondays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A pleasant, low-key bar and restaurant in the piano-bass district. The industrious p.-b. team of **Junior Mance** and **Marty Rivera** is on duty Tuesdays through Saturdays from about nine-thirty.

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—A second-floor music and performing space, where people come to ponder the meaning of harmolodics and the post-ness of postmodernism. The room is run by two amiable young guys from Wisconsin, whose views on such things as cover charges are enlightened. On Tuesday, June 14, cellist and vocalist **Hank Roberts** leads a group in a salute to Eric Dolphy; **Cecil Taylor,** a pianist sui generis, takes his five-man **Unit** through his grueling, bruising music on Wednesday, June 15; **Semantics,** a clattering downtown-jazz trio, is here on Friday, June 17, along with **Sonic Youth,** a caterwauling New York rock band. Music after nine.

Lone Star Café, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—Scary-movie buffs like the epic-size iguana on the roof; Texans like the reminders





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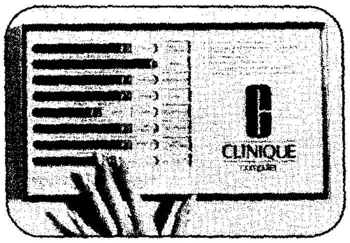

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

NIGHT LIFE–Cont'd

of home; and musicians like the Texans, the New Yorkers, and the other visitors from this planet who regularly fill the joint up. **LOUIS MYERS** and **PINETOP PERKINS**, first-generation Chicago bluesmen, perform on Monday, June 13; **JOE (KING) CARRASCO**, who plays Tex-Mex party music that sounds cheerful even when it's stomping on gringo imperialists, will be here on Tuesday, June 14, with his band, **LAS CORONAS**, and so will **WEBB WILDER & THE BEATNECKS**, a jocular Nashville rockabilly outfit; **LONNIE BROOKS**, a Louisiana soul-blues guitarist and singer who served with Clifton Chenier and Sam Cooke before settling in Chicago, holds forth on Friday, June 17. Music after nine. Dining.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—A mid-Manhattan pub for well-heeled gents and their high-heeled foxes. **JOE WILLIAMS**, the former Basie-band singer, is spending three weeks of his summer vacation here. (He lives in Las Vegas.) Mr. Williams is approaching seventy, but his deep voice remains flexible and buoyant, and he moves from a ballad to a blues as easily as a man crossing the street; he just waits for the light to change and goes. Shows at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays.

MIKELL'S, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—Jazz and jazz-enriched music (jazz-rock, Latin jazz, jazz-funk) to eat and drink to. **HIRAM BULLOCK**, a jazz-rock guitarist who played in the late Gil Evans' big band, leads a combo on Friday and Saturday, June 17-18. Music from about ten until two. Dining.

RED BLAZER TOO, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—Traditional jazz (big- and little-band Swing, several varieties of Dixieland) in the theatre district, and not a bad place to calm down in if, for instance, you happen to have just dropped a week's wages by taking the missus and your aunt from Macon to see a Broadway musical. Music from six on Sundays, from eight-thirty Mondays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays.

RITZ, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—Rock and roll of the Present Moment—and, occasionally, of the Classical Era (the fifties), the Romantic Era (the sixties), and the OPEC Era (the seventies)—in a big, fancy thirties-era ballroom. **CAMPER VAN BEETHOVEN**, a quintet from Santa Cruz, California, that works in the late-eighties Cuisinart mode (mixing psychedelic folk-rock with Celtic marches and Greek taverna music and country waltzes), will be here on Friday, June 17; the Mighty Lemon Drops, a sobersided English band, perform on Saturday, June 18. Music from ten.

SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A musical melting pot: samba bands, African pop bands, reggae people, zydeco outfits, and salsa ensembles all pass through this former luncheonette. Tuesday, June 14, a jazz septet led by the Algerian-born drummer **ERROL PARKER**; Wednesday and Thursday, June 15-16, reggae man **BIG YOUTH**; Friday, June 17, **PÉ-DE-BOI**; and Saturday, June 18, **LOREMIL MACHADO & THE SARAVA BAHIA BAND.** Music from nine Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from ten Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

SPEAKEASY, 107 Macdougal St. (598-9670)—The site, many moons ago, of Rienzi's, a coffeehouse on the beaten path; nowadays, it's home to folkies, blues people, bluegrass fiddlers, lonesome cowboys, and a stray rock person or two. **GUY CLARK**, a country singer and songwriter of the so-called outlaw school whose songs (recorded by Rodney Crowell, Jerry Jeff Walker, Johnny Cash) feature "old men with beer guts . . . lying about their lives" and other real-life images, performs here on Friday, June 17. Music from about eight-thirty. Dining.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A knotty-pine-and-brick-walled *boîte*, crowded with jazz fans from Japan, France, Germany, Denmark, Greenwich Village, and other countries. **SUN RA**, the pianist, synthesizerist, and wobbly vocalist who hails from Out There (and is currently based in Philadelphia), directs his big band Tuesday through Sunday, June 14-19; pianist **CEDAR WALTON** and his two swift sidekicks, bassist **RON CARTER** and drummer **BILLY HIGGINS**, move in on Tuesday, June 21. **ART BLAKEY**, the hard-bop kingpin for whom Cedar Walton worked in the early sixties, is here on Mondays with his late-eighties band of **JAZZ MESSENGERS.** Tee-off time is ten. Dining.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22			

TRAMPS, 125 E. 15th St. (777-5077)—A simple, no-frills blues and rock club attached to an Irish pub. The **SURREAL MC COYS**, a local country band, have the floor on Monday, June 13; **LOUP GAROU**, a Manhattan-based zydeco group, plays Friday and Saturday, June 17-18; **SOOZIE TYRELL**, a rock-and-roll singer and fiddler who sometimes appears in Buster Poindexter's shows, is here on Sunday, June 19, with the Wild Blue Marlins; **PAPA JOHN CREACH** fiddles on Wednesday and Thursday, June 22-23. Music after nine-thirty.

VILLAGE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—A bi-level operation. In the downstairs room, which is as big and unbeautiful as a mess hall, the Swingle Singers perform at seven-thirty on Friday, June 17; later that evening, and again on Saturday, June 18, saxophonist **JAMES MOODY** leads a quartet. Mondays are Latin nights, and on June 13 **DIZZY GILLESPIE**, a distinguished Latinist, solos with an orchestra led by his old Cab Calloway bandmate **MARIO BAUZA** and with an ensemble run by conga drummer **DANIEL PONCÉ**. . . . ¶ One flight up, in the Terrace Bar, **HERMAN FOSTER**, an energetic pianist who likes to set off his heavy chordal attack with delicate, winking runs, is on duty with bassist **EARL MAY** from ten Tuesday through Sunday, June 14-19, and with **JAY LEONHART** starting Tuesday, June 21. On Tuesdays, the visiting duo trades sets with jazz harpist **DAPHNE HELLMAN'S** trio.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Perhaps the most famous basement in the world, now in its second half century, this establishment has been described by Max Gordon, the wise, elfin, cigar-smoking proprietor, as "a good joint that people like to come to—thank God." **DAVID (FATHEAD) NEWMAN**, a Texas saxophonist best known for his work behind Ray Charles and other eminent soul and jazz people, will be out in front of a quintet Tuesday through Sunday, June 14-19; **BENNY GOLSON**, the tenor saxophonist and composer ("I Remember Clifford," "Whisper Not") who usually works in tandem with Art Farmer, brings in his own quartet on Tuesday, June 21. Mondays are reserved for the **MEL LEWIS** big band. Music after ten.

WEST END, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—Those who can resist the temptations of the large barroom here—pinball, video games, a dialogue with a budding semiotician from Columbia U.—will find another, smaller room, where jazz musicians hold sway. **STEVE COLSON**, a pianist and saxophonist who came out of the freewheeling Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (the Chicago black-music collective founded in the mid-sixties), leads a quintet Wednesday through Sunday, June 15-19; the group includes saxophonist **HENRY THREADGILL.** Music from about nine. Dining.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A bright, spacious, lightly forested bar and restaurant with an in-between room from which music issues, putting an end to some discussions and inspiring others. **TAL FARLOW**, a brilliant bop-rooted guitarist, trades ideas with bassist **GARY MAZZAROPPI** through Saturday, June 18. Sundays are claimed by guitarist **GENE BERTONCINI** and bassist **MICHAEL MOORE.** Music weeknights from eight and Sundays from seven.

JAZZ / ROCK / PERSONAL APPEARANCES / PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

JOHN PRINE—With Nanci Griffith. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Thursday, June 16, at 8.)

CHARLES DENNIS—La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710. Thursday through Saturday, June 16-18, at 10. Through Saturday, June 25.

DAVID PEASTON—With the Steel Wool Singers. (Jazzport, 210 Front St. 608-7889. Friday and Saturday, June 17-18, at 8 and 10.)

CLANNAD—With Raindogs. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Saturday, June 18, at 8.)

GEORGE WINSTON—Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424. Wednesday and Thursday, June 22-23, at 8.

MERKIN CONCERT HALL—Saturday, June 18, at 9:30: Michele Rosewoman's Quintessence, and the Tim Berne quintet. . . . ¶ Monday, June 20, at 8: Roscoe Mitchell's New Chamber Ensemble. (129 W. 67th St. 362-8719.)

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

GEORGE AULT (1891-1948)—Works on paper. Through July 29. (Vanderwoude Tananbaum, 24 E. 81st St. Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.)

JACOBO BORGES—New paintings in which explosive color is controlled by a shadowy figure. Through June 30. (CDS Gallery, 13 E. 75th St. Open Mondays.)

JOHN CONSTABLE (1776-1837)—Over a hundred paintings and works on paper. Through June 25. (Salander-O'Reilly, 22 E. 80th St. Open Mondays.)

EDWARD HOPPER (1882-1967)—Fifteen etchings, linocuts, and drypoints, all of which were printed by the artist. Through June 30. (Sheehan, 52 E. 76th St. Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.)

ANTONIO SEGUI—A recent series of gouaches that follows one of the artist's characters through a hectic, skyscraper-filled city. Through Saturday, June 18. (Bernard, 33 E. 74th St.)

ISAAC WITKIN—Recent sculptures in bronze and aluminum. Through June 24. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

GROUP SHOW—John Bernard Myers is remembered in a selection of paintings and sculptures by artists he represented, including Carl Andre, Mimi Gross, and Elaine de Kooning. *Through July 1. (Kouros, 23 E.* 73rd St.)

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

O. LOUIS GUGLIELMI (1906-56)—Colorful geometric abstractions of fragmented objects and vistas. Through June 30. (Washburn, 41 E. 57th St. Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.)

DAVID HOCKNEY—A number of gallery shows are being held to coincide with his retrospective at the Metropolitan Museum, which will open Saturday, June 18. Drawings at Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. Through July 29. . . . ¶ Prints at Drake, 50 W. 57th St. Through July 23. . . . ¶ Early graphics at Ingber, 415 West Broadway. Through July 30. . . . ¶ Photographs at Kasmin, 580 Broadway. Through July 16.

Justen Ladda—An installation linking art and commerce, by an artist whose assemblages of toasters, hair curlers, and golf clubs recall such well-known sculptures as Brancusi's "Kiss" and Giacometti's "Pointing Man," and whose paintings make use of fake fur and plaid fabrics. Through July 15. (Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.)

Claude and François-Xavier Lalanne—Sculptures by this husband and wife, many inspired by the animal kingdom—a hippopotamus that is also a bathtub, for instance, and a crocodile that is also a chair. Through June 30. (Marisa del Re, 41 E. 57th St.)

Kim MacConnel / Robert Barry—New paintings. / Monochromatic paintings. Through July 1. (Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Isamu Noguchi—New bronzes. Through June 25. (Herstand, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Robert Andrew Parker—Recent gouaches prompted by the artist's trip through the Himalayas. Through June 24. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St. Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.)

Picasso (1881-1973)—Paintings, sculptures, and prints from 1950 to 1973. Through July 29. (Krugier, 41 E. 57th St. Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.)

Kenneth Polinskie—Recent watercolors, some on handmade paper. Through June 29. (Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St.)

Milton Resnick—Densely painted abstractions done in the late fifties. Through July 29. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

Dan Rizzie—New paintings and collages. Through June 25. (Ruth Siegel, 24 W. 57th St.)

Dorothea Tanning—Lush paintings of amorphous figures. Through Saturday, June 18. (Kent, 41 E. 57th St.)

Group Shows—At the ACA, 41 E. 57th St.: Landscapes by Sylvia Mangold, Jane Freilicher, and Michael Zwack, among others. Through July 9. (Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.) . . . BLUM HELMAN, 20 W. 57th St.: Paintings by Michael Young, Jack Barth, and Joan Nelson. Through July 30. . . . BORGENICHT, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.: The annual invitational consists of paintings by Donald Powley, Ruth Leonard, and others, and a construction by Danita Geltner. Through June 30. . . . DE NAGY, 41 W. 57th St.: Works on paper by Philip Guston, André Masson, Melissa Meyer, and Robin Utterback, among others. Through June 30. . . . FRENCH, 41 W. 57th St.: Works in various mediums by Ed McGowin, William Christenberry, Jeanne Duval, and others. Through Saturday, June 18. (Open Mondays.) . . . MIDTOWN, 11 E. 57th St.: Wood reliefs by Bernard Langlais, paintings in mixed mediums by Charles McGill, and egg-tempera works by Abby Shahn. Through June 24. . . . TILTON, 24 W. 57th St.: Small-scale paintings by Joe Andoe, photographs and paintings by John Robertshaw, and a sound-oriented installation by Alvin Lucier. Through June 30. . . . ZABRISKIE, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.: Works by the Nouveaux Réalistes, including Yves Klein, Niki de Saint-Phalle, and Gérard Deschamps. Through July 8. (Open Mondays.)

Sculpture—Pieces by Richard Artschwager, Richard Deacon, Luciano Fabro, Claes Oldenburg, Giuseppe Penone, and Richard Serra. Through July 1. (Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

GALLERIES—SoHo

Herb Aach (1923-85)—Large abstract paintings. Through June 25. (Ingber, 415 West Broadway.)

Peter Ambrose—Sculptures in various mediums by an artist who reduces hearts, torsos, and feet to blocklike forms. Through June 25. (Esman, 70 Greene St.)

Eric Bainbridge—Sculptures in mixed mediums. Through June 25. (Ala, in a new location at 560 Broadway.)

Toby Buonagurio—Serenely beautiful ceramic heads wearing ceremonial headdresses that could have been borrowed from Carmen Miranda or an Egyptian tomb. Through Saturday, June 18. (Steinbaum, 132 Greene St.)

Terry Lee Dill—Sculptures. Through June 25. (Ligouri, 93 Grand St.)

Eric Fischl—New paintings. Through June 25. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

Antonio Frasconi—A hundred politically inspired woodcuts by this Uruguayan-born graphic artist. Through June 30. (Museum of Contemporary Hispanic Art, 584 Broadway. Open Sundays; open Thursday evenings until 8.)

Carol Galligan—Painted torn-paper sculptures. Through June 25. (Allen, 560 Broadway.)

Arthur González—Figurative wall sculptures that have nautical motifs. "The Gondolier," a life-size figure, tows a miniature gondola (mounted a few feet away) with a piece of braided line and holds a Japanese paintbrush for a pole. Through Thursday, June 16. (Sharpe, 152 Wooster St.)

Stephanie Brody Lederman—Paintings. Through July 15. (Katzen Brown, 475 Broome St. Open Sundays.)

Al Loving / James Little—Paintings by an artist who uses scrub brushes and brooms in lieu of a paintbrush. / Paintings. Through July 1. (Kelly, 591 Broadway.)

Patricia Nix—Painted constructions in mixed mediums. Through July 14. (Nerlino-McGear, 96 Greene St.)

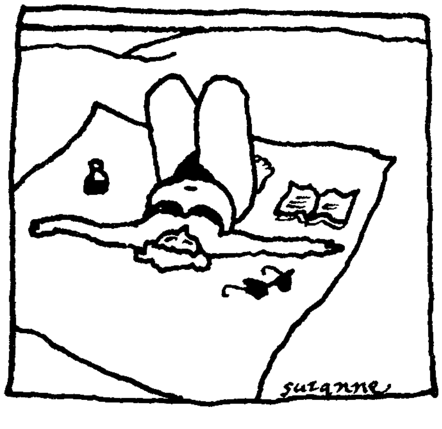
Edward Ruscha / Frank Gehry—Works on paper. / New furniture designs in corrugated cardboard. Through July 1. (Castelli, 420 West Broadway.)

Hunt Slonem and David LaChapelle—Saints from Eastern and Western religions are depicted in paintings by the former and in Cibachromes by the latter. Through Saturday, June 18. (Trabia-MacAfee, 54 Greene St. Photographs by LaChapelle are also on view at the 56 Bleecker Street Gallery.)

Peter Solow / David Horsely—Drawings. / Paintings. Through June 30. (Gallery Moos, 133 Greene St.)

Sally Vagliano / Frederick Nichols—New pastels. / Landscapes. Through July 1. (Perlow, 560 Broadway.)

Group Shows—At the AUDIELLO, 142 Greene St.: Paintings, including works by Claudia Hart, Josef Ramaseder, and Pat Steir. Through June 25. . . . BROWN, 560 Broadway: White works, mainly, by Ford Beckman, Holt Quentel, Suzan Etkin, Andrew Lord, and others. Through Saturday, June 18. . . . THE DRAWING CENTER, 35 Wooster St.: A selection of sixty-nine drawings that the curator has categorized as art that copies art. Michelangelo, Dürer, Watteau, Cézanne, and Picasso are among the copiers. Through July 23. (Open Wednesday evenings until 8.) . . . EXIT ART, 578 Broadway: An exhibition of works in mixed mediums centered on the issue of the monetary debts of the United States and the Third World; artists Christy Rupp, Betty Beaumont, Edgar Heap of Birds, and Richard Armijo are included. Through June 30. . . . GRUENEBAUM, 415 West Broadway: Paintings and sculptures by James Kelly, Gloria Kisch, and Wade Miller, among others. Through June 25. . . . HANSON, 415 West Broadway: Works in various mediums by Carroll Dunham, Michael Hurson, Deborah Kass, Jeffrey Wasserman, and four other artists. Through June 28. . . . KOURY WINGATE, 578 Broadway: Dike Blair, General Idea, and Cary Smith are among the painters and sculptors in this show of new works. Through July 22. . . . LORENCE-MONK, 568 Broadway: Paintings, drawings, photographs, and sculptures by artists who have taken a close-up look at the human figure. Diane Arbus, Eric Fischl, George Segal, and Willem de Kooning are among them. Through June 25. . . . MARCUS, 578 Broadway: Sculptures, drawings, photographs, and installations by Hannah Collins, Nan Goldin, Gloria Friedmann, Pepe Espaliú, and Tim Hawkinson. Through June 25. . . . METRO PICTURES, 150 Greene St.: Two works each by Peter Halley, Jennifer Bolande, and others. Through June 25. . . . PEARL, 420 West Broadway: Geometric works from the fifties and sixties by Burgoyne Diller, Frank Stella, and Charmion von Wiegand, among others. Through July 1. . . . PROTETCH, 560 Broadway: Paintings by Arakawa, Alfred Jensen, and Sol LeWitt, who also has a sculpture on view. Through July 15. . . . WEBER, 142 Greene St.: Photographs by Thomas Joshua Cooper, a conceptual installation by Franz Erhard Walther, and a series of more than two hundred works in plaster by Allan McCollum. Through July 23.



OTHER GALLERIES

Bill Barrette—Constructions centered on daguerreotypes of women. Through June 26. (Fiction-Nonfiction, 155 Avenue B, at 10th St. Opens at noon on Saturdays and Sundays.)

Peter Grass—Recent paintings. Through June 25. (Braathen, 33 Bleecker St., at Lafayette St.)

Yukimura S. Konishi—Two shows of abstract works presented by the Humphrey gallery: oils at 37 E. 7th St., and collages at 242 E. 5th St. Through Sunday, June 19. (Both places open at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Elaine Reichek—An installation that incorporates no fewer than two hundred coconuts. Through June 25. (56 Bleecker Street Gallery.)

Richard Rezac—Abstract sculptures in cast iron, cast bronze, and wood. Through July 3. (Loughelton, 19 Second Ave., at 1st St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Andy Warhol (1930-87)—Silk screens the artist made from F.B.I. Most Wanted posters. Through June 30. (Gagosian, 521 W. 23rd St., near Eleventh Ave.) . . . ¶ Early works in various mediums. Through July 30. (Ingber, 415 West Broadway.)

Grands Projets—A show promoting nine Parisian architectural projects. Included are drawings, models, and photographs of I. M. Pei's addition to the Louvre and of the Great Arch of La Défense, by Johan Otto von Spreckelsen. Through July 3. (U.S. Custom House, Bowling Green at the foot of Broadway. Daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6.)

Group Shows—At the BROMM, 90 West Broadway: Sculptures by Julian Opie, Rosemarie Castoro, and Jody Pinto, among others. Through June 30. (Closed Saturdays.) . . . CUGLIANI, 508 Greenwich St., at Spring St.: Two small paintings each by Moira Dryer, Joe Andoe, Michele Zalopany, and others. Through June 30. . . . KLEIN, 611 Broadway: Works in various mediums by Pat Steir, Matt Mullican, and Alan Charlton. Through July 2. . . . P.P.O.W, 337 E. 8th St., near Avenue C: Social and political art of the Lower East Side, dating from the eighteen-nineties to the present; the show includes over a hundred works by Reginald Marsh, David Robbins, Berenice Abbott, Allen Ginsberg, Adam Purple, Anton van Dalen, and others. Through July 15. (Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.) . . . 303 GALLERY, 513 E. 6th St., near Avenue A: Works in mixed mediums by David Cabrera, Larry Johnson, Liz Larner, and Charles Ray. Through July 9. (Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Gwen Akin and Allan Ludwig—Photographs by two collaborators who specialize in macabre subjects; for example, freshly killed partridges and skeletons with two heads. Through July 2. (Cadot, 470 Broome St.)

Josef Koudelka—Photographs, including prints of European Gypsies and country people and

ART—Cont'd

of the 1968 Prague uprising. Through July 10. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Neil Maurer / Lois Conner—Photographs of white objects in a white room. / The artist's platinum prints of Chinese landscapes were the source of these eighteen photogravures printed by Thomas Platt Palmer. Through June 30. (Pfeifer, 568 Broadway.)

Olivia Parker—Contact prints of still-lifes. Through June 30. (Lieberman & Saul, 155 Spring St. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

Rosalind Solomon—Seventy-five large-scale works, collectively titled "Portraits in the Time of AIDS." Through July 1. (Grey Art Gallery, New York University, 33 Washington Pl. Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 to 6:30; Wednesdays, 10 to 8:30; Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 1 to 5.)

Hiroshi Sugimoto—Photographs, including a series on American movie theatres. Through June 30. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway.)

Garry Winogrand (1928-84)—The Museum of Modern Art has mounted a retrospective of his work; see below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

Group Shows—At the **gladstone,** 99 Greene St.: Portraiture by Robert Mapplethorpe, Richard Prince, Thomas Ruff, and Jeff Wall. Through July 29. . . . **laurence miller,** 138 Spring St.: Elvis Presley, Teddy Roosevelt, and Daniel Boone are among the subjects of a show that reconsiders American history and myths; the artists—many of whom incorporate photographs into their work—include Jim Goldberg, Judith Ross, and William Eggleston. Through June 30. . . . **tweed,** 52 Chambers St.: Photographs chronicling the history of New York's lesbian and gay communities. Through June 30. (Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Museum Mile Festival—Tuesday, June 14, for the tenth year, Fifth Avenue above Eighty-sixth Street will be open to pedestrians and street performers only, from six to nine in the evening, and the museums that line the Avenue will all be open free of charge (except the Metropolitan, which expects a donation).

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—The earliest work in the David Hockney retrospective will be a self-portrait done when the artist was seventeen. Mr. Hockney has also recorded the Acoustiguide tape for the show, on which he explains his ideas and techniques. Starts Saturday, June 18. Complementary exhibits are at André Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.; Douglas Drake, 50 W. 57th St.; Paul Kasmin, 580 Broadway; and Ingber, 415 West Broadway. . . . ¶ Ninety paintings and drawings by Paul Klee, gifts to the museum from Heinz Berggruen. Through July 31. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—A retrospective of work by Garry Winogrand, a photographer who sought out crowds and documented them, snapshot style, on city streets and at press conferences, peace rallies, zoos, and rodeos. Through Aug. 16. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—A retrospective of works by Georges Braque. . . . ¶ A loan show of sixty modern paintings from the National Gallery in Prague, consisting entirely of works that are in America for the first time. The artists include Cézanne, Chagall, Klimt, Gauguin, and Matisse, and their Czech counterparts. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 7:45, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—Paintings and drawings from the past twelve years by Elizabeth Murray. Through June 26. . . . ¶ Drawings by the contemporary artists George Condo, Mike Kelley, Ellen Phelan, and Janis Provisor. Through July 3. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—A show documenting the work of Gordon Matta-Clark (1943-78), who used abandoned buildings as sculptural material—cutting out arcs, circles, etc., and displaying leftover fragments in galleries. Through July 11. . . . ¶ A drawing and a sculpture each by forty contemporary Israeli artists, including Pinchas Cohen-Gan, Teresa Gejer, and Osvaldo Romberg. Through June 27. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—A show on the contemporary partnership between artists and architects, focussing on the artists' contributions. There will be, for instance, stone seats by Scott Burton that are like those he made for the Equitable Center, and objects in glass by three artists who worked on the redesigned Rainbow Room. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—The Arts and Crafts Movement in America (1875-1920) is represented in a display of about two hundred objects, including stained glass, silver, books, furniture, jewelry, and textiles. Through June 26. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St.—Works by two twentieth-century Japanese artists: Shiko Munakata, represented by, for instance, a series of hanging scrolls made of woodblock prints, and by an ink painting executed while he was on a visit to New York; and Kitaoji Rosanjin, whose ceramics based on traditional Japanese, Chinese, and Korean styles are on view. Through June 24. (Open Mondays through Fridays, 11 to 5.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—A comprehensive exhibit of the work of Beatrix Potter (1866-1943) which includes watercolors of her familiar subjects (Peter Rabbit, Jemima Puddle-Duck) and her not so familiar subjects—insects, plants, and fossils. Through Aug. 21. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The Uffizi Gallery, in Florence, repository of nearly thirteen hundred artists' self-portraits, has sent a selection of thirty—by Andrea del Sarto, Annibale Carracci, Walter Crane, and others—in an exchange show with the National Academy, which sent a selection of its thirteen hundred self-portraits to Florence this spring. Through July 31. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—A show by the Swiss sculptor Markus Raetz. Through July 10. (Open daily except Mondays and Tuesdays. Hours: Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—The sweet pleasures of childhood reading are revived in an exhibit on children's literature. About two hundred items, ranging from first editions to memorabilia, are included: the two Hoods, Robin and Little Red, are here in drawings by Howard Pyle and by Jean-François Millet; Babar is seen in a 1931 first edition; and Winnie-the-Pooh and friends are evoked in five stuffed animals that were A. A. Milne's inspiration. (Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 6.) . . . ¶ The Berg Collection of English and American Literature is celebrating its jubilee with a show of a hundred and fifty of its prize manuscripts and books, among them a first edition of Poe's "Tamerlane and Other Poems," the notebooks of Eliot and Auden, one of Virginia Woolf's diaries, and the typescript of Robert Lowell's "The Drive from West Street to Danbury." (Open daily, except Sundays and Thursdays, 10 to 5:45.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—A retrospective of paintings and prints by James Lesesne Wells. Through Sunday, June 19. (Open daily except Mondays and Tuesdays. Hours: Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

MUSIC

Florilegium Chamber Choir—JoAnn Rice directing, with vocal and instrumental soloists. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Tuesday, June 14, at 8.)

Manhattan Marimba Quartet—In a tribute to George Gershwin, with works by Gershwin, Daniel Levitan, Norman Grossman, and Lenny Pickett. With assisting artists. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Thursday, June 16, at 8.)

Bel Canto Opera—Victoria Bond conducting Francesco Cavalli's "La Calisto," with a chamber orchestra. The first in a series of two performances; directed by Elly Stone. (St. Bartholomew's Church, Park Ave. at 51st St. Saturday, June 18, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

New York City Gay Men's Chorus—With the Boston Gay Men's Chorus. Gary Miller will direct the local group, and Robert Barney will direct the New Englanders. (Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424. Sunday, June 19, at 7.)

Metropolitan Opera, Concert Productions—**central park's great lawn:** Tuesday, June 21, at 7 (rain date, June 23), "L'Elisir d'Amore," with Kathleen Battle, Dawn Kotoski, Luciano Pavarotti, Paolo Coni, and Giuseppe Taddei; conducted by Marcello Panni. . . . **snug harbor,** Staten Island: Wednesday, June 22, at 8 (rain date, June 23), "Turandot," with Linda Kelm, Judith Haddon, Giorgio Lamberti, Harry Dworchak, and others; Julius Rudel.

Manhattan Philharmonic—Peter Tiboris and Dennis Loy directing choral works. (Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424. Tuesday, June 21, at 7:30.)

SPORTS

Baseball—Mets at Shea Stadium (1-718 507-8499): Vs. St. Louis, Monday through Wednesday, June 13-15, at 7:35. . . . ¶ Philadelphia, Friday, June 17, at 7:35; Saturday, June 18, at 7:05; and Sunday, June 19, at 1:35. . . . ¶ Pittsburgh, Monday and Tuesday, June 20-21, at 7:35, and Wednesday, June 22, at 1:35.

Golf—The U.S.G.A. Open Championship. (The Country Club, Brookline, Mass. Championship rounds, Thursday through Sunday, June 16-19.)

Racing—At **belmont:** Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1. The Bowling Green Handicap, Saturday, June 18. . . . **monmouth park,** Oceanport, N.J.: Weekdays at 1:30. . . . **atlantic city race course,** McKee City, N.J.: Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:15.

Trotting—At **meadowlands:** Weeknights at 7:30. . . . **yonkers raceway:** Nightly at 8, and Tuesdays at 1; starting Thursday, June 16. . . . **roosevelt raceway:** Nightly at 7:30; through Wednesday, June 15. . . . **saratoga raceway,** Saratoga Springs: Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:45.

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

EAST SIDE

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
(Separate admissions) "Mix-Up" (1986; directed by Françoise Romand) and "Call Me Madame" (1987; Françoise Romand); "Les Rendez-vous d'Anna" (1978; Chantal Akerman; in French), with Aurore Clément, Léa Massari, Jean-Pierre Cassel, and Helmut Griem; and "The Killers" (1946 †).

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: Through June 16: "Salome's Last Dance" (Ken Russell). From June 17: "Red Heat" (Walter Hill), with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jim Belushi.
Theatre 2: "Funny Farm" (George Roy Hill), with Chevy Chase.
Theatre 3: "Rambo III" (Peter Macdonald), with Sylvester Stallone and Richard Crenna.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
Through June 21: "Poltergeist III" (Gary Sherman), with Heather O'Rourke, Tom Skerritt, Nancy Allen, and Zelda Rubinstein.
From June 22: "Who Framed Roger Rabbit" (Robert Zemeckis), with Bob Hoskins and Christopher Lloyd.

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Big Business" (Jim Abrahams), with Bette Midler and Lily Tomlin.

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Willow" (†).
Theatre 2: "Crocodile Dundee II" (John Cornell), with Paul Hogan.
Theatre 3: "The Presidio" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Funny Farm" (George Roy Hill), with Chevy Chase.

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"The Last Emperor" (†).

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Through June 16: "Beethoven's Nephew" (Paul Morrissey).
From June 17: To be announced.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Big" (Penny Marshall), with Tom Hanks.

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
Through June 16: "The Moderns" (†).
From June 17: To be announced.

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Crocodile Dundee II" (John Cornell), with Paul Hogan.
Theatre 2: "Crocodile Dundee II."

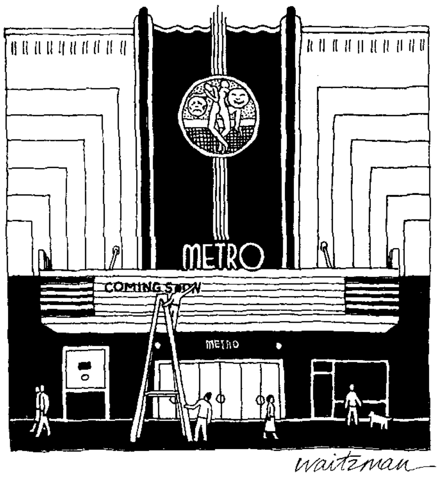
D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Poltergeist III" (Gary Sherman), with Heather O'Rourke, Tom Skerritt, Nancy Allen, and Zelda Rubinstein.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: Through June 16: "Above the Law" (Andrew Davis), with Steven Seagal. From June 17: "Red Heat" (Walter Hill), with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jim Belushi.
Theatre 2: Through June 16: "The Milagro Beanfield War" (†). June 17-21: "Red Heat." From June 22: "Who Framed Roger Rabbit" (Robert Zemeckis), with Bob Hoskins and Christopher Lloyd.

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: Through June 16: "Rikky and Pete" (Nadia Tass), with Stephen Kearney. From June 17: "A World Apart" (†).
Theatre 2: "Big Business" (Jim Abrahams), with Bette Midler and Lily Tomlin.

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Rambo III" (Peter Macdonald), with Sylvester Stallone and Richard Crenna.
Theatre 2: "Moonstruck" (†).

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
Through June 16: "Funny Farm" (George Roy Hill), with Chevy Chase.
From June 17: "The Great Outdoors" (Howard Deutch), with Dan Aykroyd and John Candy.



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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 13.

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: Through June 14: "The Manchurian Candidate" (1962; John Frankenheimer), with Frank Sinatra, Laurence Harvey, and Angela Lansbury. From June 15: "Bull Durham" (Ron Shelton), with Kevin Costner and Susan Sarandon.
Theatre 2: "The Presidio" (†).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"The Unbearable Lightness of Being" (†).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Willow" (†).

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"The Presidio" (†).

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "Crocodile Dundee II" (John Cornell), with Paul Hogan.
Theatre 2: Through June 16: "Rambo III" (Peter Macdonald), with Sylvester Stallone and Richard Crenna. From June 17 (tentative): "Red Heat" (Walter Hill), with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jim Belushi.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Big" (Penny Marshall), with Tom Hanks.
Theatre 2: "Big Business" (Jim Abrahams), with Bette Midler and Lily Tomlin.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum I and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatres open in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: Through June 14: "Welcome in Vienna" (†). From June 15: "Rights and Reactions: Lesbian and Gay Rights on Trial" (1987; directed by Phil Zwickler and Jane Lippman) and "Oscar Wilde: Spendthrift of Genius" (1986; Sean O'Mordha), both documentaries.
Theatre 2: See listings under "Revival Houses."

Bleecker St. Cinema I and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: "My Life as a Dog" (1987; Lasse Hallström; in Swedish), with Anton Glanzelius.
Theatre 2: "Tampopo" (†).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Hairspray" (†).
Theatre 2: "Big Business" (Jim Abrahams), with Bette Midler and Lily Tomlin.

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Through June 16: "The Last Emperor" (†).
From June 17: "The Decline of Western Civilization Part II: The Metal Years" (Penelope Spheeris).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Big" (Penny Marshall), with Tom Hanks.
Theatre 2: "White Mischief" (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: Through June 16: "Aria," ten episodes by ten directors. From June 17: "The Moderns" (†).
Theatre 2: "Au Revoir les Enfants" ("Goodbye, Children") (†).
Theatre 3: "Candy Mountain" (†).
Theatre 4: "Stormy Monday" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: Through June 16: "The Manchurian Candidate" (1962; John Frankenheimer), with Frank Sinatra, Laurence Harvey, and Angela Lansbury. From June 17: "The Great Outdoors" (Howard Deutch), with Dan Aykroyd and John Candy.
Theatre 2: "Big" (Penny Marshall), with Tom Hanks.
Theatre 3: Through June 14: "The Unbearable Lightness of Being" (†). From June 15: "Bull Durham" (Ron Shelton), with Kevin Costner and Susan Sarandon.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Willow" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
Through June 21: "Powaqqatsi" (Godfrey Reggio).
From June 22: "Who Framed Roger Rabbit" (Robert Zemeckis), with Bob Hoskins and Christopher Lloyd.

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"Au Revoir les Enfants" ("Goodbye, Children") (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"The Last Emperor" (†).

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
"White Mischief" (†).

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)
Through June 14: "History" (Luigi Comencini; in Italian).
From June 15: "My Life as a Dog" (1987; Lasse Hallström; in Swedish), with Anton Glanzelius.

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"Da" (Matt Clark), with Barnard Hughes, Martin Sheen, and William Hickey.

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
Through June 16: "Dominick and Eugene" (Robert M. Young), with Tom Hulce and Ray Liotta.
From June 17: To be announced.

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Willow" (†).

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Bagdad Café" (†).
Theatre 2: Through June 16: "Dragon Chow" (†). From June 17: "Commissar" (Alexander Askoldov; in Russian).
Theatre 3: "A Taxing Woman" (†).

Cinema Studio I and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "Babette's Feast" (†).
Theatre 2: "Wings of Desire" (†).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
Through June 16: "Funny Farm" (George Roy Hill), with Chevy Chase.
From June 17: "The Great Outdoors" (Howard Deutch), with Dan Aykroyd and John Candy.

Embassy 72nd St. I and 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: "Big" (Penny Marshall), with Tom Hanks.
Theatre 2: "Big Business" (Jim Abrahams), with Bette Midler and Lily Tomlin.

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Poltergeist III" (Gary Sherman),

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

with Heather O'Rourke, Tom Skerritt, Nancy Allen, and Zelda Rubinstein.

Theatre 2: "Crocodile Dundee II" (John Cornell), with Paul Hogan.

Theatre 3: Through June 14: "The Manchurian Candidate" (1962; John Frankenheimer), with Frank Sinatra, Laurence Harvey, and Angela Lansbury. From June 15: "Bull Durham" (Ron Shelton), with Kevin Costner and Susan Sarandon.

Theatre 4: "Rambo III" (Peter Macdonald), with Sylvester Stallone and Richard Crenna.

Theatre 5: Through June 16: "Crocodile Dundee II." From June 17 (tentative): "Red Heat" (Walter Hill), with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jim Belushi.

Theatre 6: "The Presidio" (†).

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)

Theatre 1: Through June 16: "The Milagro Beanfield War" (†). From June 17: To be announced.

Theatre 2: Through June 16: "Stand and Deliver" (†). From June 17: To be announced.

Columbia Cinema, B'way at 103rd. (316-6660)

Through June 21: "The Unbearable Lightness of Being" (†).

From June 22: "Who Framed Roger Rabbit" (Robert Zemeckis), with Bob Hoskins and Christopher Lloyd.

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)

Theatre 1: Through June 16: "Moonstruck" (†). From June 17: To be announced.

Theatre 2: Through June 16: "Beetlejuice" (†). From June 17: To be announced.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)

Theatre 1: "Rambo III" (directed by Peter Macdonald), with Sylvester Stallone and Richard Crenna.

Theatre 2: Through June 16: "Rambo III." From June 17: "Red Heat" (Walter Hill), with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jim Belushi.

Theatre 3: Through June 14: "Maniac Cop" (William Lustig). From June 15: "Bull Durham" (Ron Shelton), with Kevin Costner and Susan Sarandon.

Theatre 4: Through June 14: "Bloodsport" (Newt Arnold), with Jean Claude Van Damme. From June 15: "Bull Durham."

Theatre 5: "Salsa" (Boaz Davidson).

Theatre 6: "Friday the 13th Part VII—The New Blood" (John Carl Buechler).

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)

"Big Business" (Jim Abrahams), with Bette Midler and Lily Tomlin.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)

Theatre 2: "The Presidio" (†).

Theatre 3: "The Presidio" (†).

Theatre 4: "The Presidio" (†).

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)

"Crocodile Dundee II" (John Cornell), with Paul Hogan.

Movieland, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)

Through June 16: "Above the Law" (Andrew Davis), with Steven Seagal.

From June 17: "The Great Outdoors" (Howard Deutch), with Dan Aykroyd and John Candy.

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)

Theatre 1: "Funny Farm" (George Roy Hill), with Chevy Chase.

Theatre 2: "Big" (Penny Marshall), with Tom Hanks.

Warner, 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760)

"Poltergeist III" (Gary Sherman), with Heather O'Rourke, Tom Skerritt, Nancy Allen, and Zelda Rubinstein.

REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)

June 13: "Sunset Boulevard" (1950; directed by Billy Wilder), with Gloria Swanson, William Holden, and Erich von Stroheim; and "The Country Girl" (1954; George Seaton), with Bing Crosby, Grace Kelly, and William Holden.

June 14-15: "Alfie" (1966; Lewis Gilbert), with Michael Caine; and "If . . ." (1969; Lindsay Anderson), with Malcolm McDowell.

June 16-18: "Breakfast at Tiffany's" (1961; Blake Edwards), with Audrey Hepburn, George Peppard, Patricia Neal, Martin Balsam, and Mickey Rooney; and "The Rose Tattoo" (1955; Daniel Mann), with Anna Magnani, Burt Lancaster, Marisa Pavan, Ben Cooper, and Jo Van Fleet.

June 19-20: "Anything Goes" (1956; Robert Lewis), with Bing Crosby, Donald O'Connor, Jeanmaire, and Mitzi Gaynor; and "Going My Way" (1944; Leo McCarey), with Bing Crosby and Barry Fitzgerald.

June 21-22: "Detective Story" (1951; William Wyler), with Kirk Douglas, Eleanor Parker, and William Bendix; and "The Desperate Hours" (1955; William Wyler), with Humphrey Bogart, Fredric March, Martha Scott, Arthur Kennedy, and Dewey Martin.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)

Through June 14: "Five Corners" (1988; Tony Bill), with Jodie Foster; and "Taxi Driver" (1976; Martin Scorsese), with Robert De Niro, Harvey Keitel, Cybill Shepherd, and Jodie Foster.

June 15-16: "Wish You Were Here" (1987; David Leland), with Emily Lloyd; and "Personal Services" (1987; Terry Jones), with Julie Walters.

June 17-18: "Gothic" (1987; Ken Russell); and "The Devils" (1971; Ken Russell), with Vanessa Redgrave and Oliver Reed.

June 19: "1900" (1977; Bernardo Bertolucci), with Robert De Niro, Burt Lancaster, Donald Sutherland, Dominique Sanda, Sterling Hayden, and Gérard Depardieu.

June 20-21: "Hi, Mom!" (1970; Brian De Palma), with Robert De Niro; "Greetings" (1968; Brian De Palma), with Robert De Niro; and "The Wedding Party" (1963; Brian De Palma).

From June 22: "Patti Rocks" (1988; David Burton Morris), with Chris Mulkey, Karen Landry, and John Jenkins; and "The Decline of the American Empire" (1986; Denys Arcand; in French).

Film Forum 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)

June 13: "Nanook of the North" (1921; Robert Flaherty; a silent film); "Tabu" (1931; Robert Flaherty and F. W. Murnau; a silent film); and "The Last Laugh" (1924; F. W. Murnau; a German silent film), with Emil Jannings.

June 14: "Kanal" (1956; Andrzej Wajda; in Polish); and "Ashes and Diamonds" (1958; Andrzej Wajda; in Polish), with Zbigniew Cybulski.

June 15: "The 39 Steps" (1935; Alfred Hitchcock), with Madeleine Carroll, Robert Donat, Godfrey Tearle, Peggy Ashcroft, and John Laurie; and "The Lady Vanishes" (1938; Alfred Hitchcock), with Dame May Whitty, Margaret Lockwood, Michael Redgrave, Paul Lukas, and Cecil Parker.

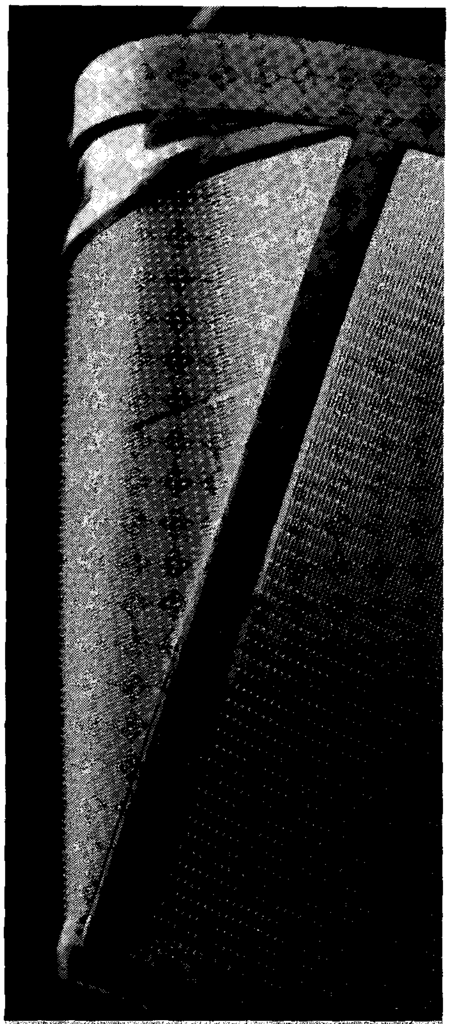
June 16: "The Virgin Spring" (1960; Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Max von Sydow and Gunnel Lindblom; and "Wild Strawberries" (1957; Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Victor Sjöström, Ingrid Thulin, and Gunnar Björnstrand.

June 17-18: "Beauty and the Beast" (1946; Jean Cocteau; in French), with Jean Marais, Josette Day, Marcel André, and Michel Auclair; and "Orpheus" (1949; Jean Cocteau; in French), with Jean Marais, Maria Casarès and François Périer.

June 19: "The Horse's Mouth" (1958; Ronald Neame), with Alec Guinness and Kay Walsh; and "Kind Hearts and Coronets" (1950; Robert Hamer), with Alec Guinness, Valerie Hobson, and Dennis Price.

June 20: "The Phantom of the Opera" (1925; Rupert Julian; a silent film), with Lon Chaney; and "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" (1923; Wallace Worsley; a silent film), with Lon Chaney.

June 21: "Floating Weeds" (1959; Yasujiro Ozu; in Japanese); "Fires on the Plain" (1959; Kon Ichikawa; in Japanese), with Eiji Funakoshi; and "Gate of Hell" (1954; Teinosuke Kinugasa; in Japanese), with Machiko Kyo.



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June 22: "La Ronde" (1950; Max Ophuls; in French), with Gérard Philipe, Danielle Darrieux, Simone Simon, and Jean-Louis Barrault; and "Forbidden Games" (1952; René Clément; in French), with Brigitte Fossey and Georges Poujouly.

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)

June 13: "Radio Days" (1987; Woody Allen), with Mia Farrow; and "The Great American Broadcast" (1941; Archie Mayo), with Alice Faye, Jack Oakie, and John Payne.

June 14: "Koyaanisqatsi" (1983; Godfrey Reggio); and "The Secret Life of Plants" (1978; Walon Green).

June 15: "The Mating Season" (1951; Mitchell Leisen), with Gene Tierney, John Lund, and Thelma Ritter; and "Rings on Her Fingers" (1942; Rouben Mamoulian), with Gene Tierney, Henry Fonda, Laird Cregar, and Spring Byington.

June 16: "Unfaithfully Yours" (1948; Preston Sturges), with Rex Harrison and Linda Darnell; and "The Power and the Glory" (1933; William K. Howard), with Spencer Tracy and Colleen Moore.

June 17-18: "Made in U.S.A." (1967; Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Anna Karina; and "Pierrot le Fou" (1965; Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Jean-Paul Belmondo and Anna Karina.

June 19: "The Draughtsman's Contract" (1983; Peter Greenaway), with Anthony Higgins, Janet Suzman, and Anne Louise Lambert; and "Blow-Up" (1966; Michelangelo Antonioni), with Vanessa Redgrave and David Hemmings.

June 20: "Ace in the Hole" ("The Big Carnival;" 1951; Billy Wilder), with Kirk Douglas and Jan Sterling; and "Five Star Final" (1931; Mervyn LeRoy), with Edward G. Robinson.

June 21: "The King of Comedy" (1983; Martin Scorsese), with Robert De Niro and Jerry Lewis; and "The Nutty Professor" (†).

June 22: "The Ghost and Mrs. Muir" (1947; Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Gene Tierney and Rex Harrison; and "Heaven Can Wait" (1943; Ernst Lubitsch), with Gene Tierney and Don Ameche.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

June 13: "Kameradschaft" (1931; G. W. Pabst; in German); and "Westfront 1918" (1930; G. W. Pabst; in German).

June 14: "The Last Laugh" (1924; F. W. Murnau; a German silent film), with Emil Jannings; and "Spies" (1929; Fritz Lang; a German silent film).

June 15: "Marked Woman" (1937; Lloyd Bacon), with Bette Davis, Humphrey Bogart, and Eduardo Ciannelli; and "Kid Galahad" (1937; Michael Curtiz), with Bette Davis, Edward G. Robinson, and Humphrey Bogart.

June 16: "Rififi" (1955; Jules Dassin; in French), with Jean Servais, Robert Manuel, Carl Mohner, and Dassin; and "Shoot the Piano Player" (1960; François Truffaut; in French), with Charles Aznavour and Marie Dubois.

June 17-18: "The Woman in White" (1948; Peter Godfrey), with Gig Young, Eleanor Parker, Sydney Greenstreet, and Alexis Smith; and "Rebecca" (1940; Alfred Hitchcock), with Joan Fontaine, Laurence Olivier, Judith Anderson, George Sanders, and Florence Bates.

June 19-20: "The Threepenny Opera" (1931; G. W. Pabst; in German), with Lotte Lenya; and "The Blue Angel" (1929; Josef von Sternberg; in German), with Marlene Dietrich, Emil Jannings, and Hans Albers.

June 21: "A Royal Scandal" (†) and "Tarnished Lady" (†).

June 22: "Les Misérables" (1935; Richard Boleslavsky), with Charles Laughton and Fredric March; and "The Prisoner of Shark Island" (1936; John Ford), with Warner Baxter and Gloria Stuart.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490; a limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

Theatre 1: Theatre closed.

Theatre 2: June 13 at 6:30: A program of films by Willie Varela, who will be present. . . . ¶ June 14 at 3 and 6:30: "Jules and Jim" (1962; directed by François Truffaut; in French, with English subtitles), with Jeanne Moreau, Oskar Werner, and Henri Serre. . . . ¶ June 16 at 3 and 6:30: "The Trial" (1962; Orson Welles), with Welles, Jeanne Moreau, and Anthony Perkins. . . . ¶ June 17 at 3 and 6:30: "Scorpio Rising" (1963; Kenneth Anger); and "Les Carabiniers" (1963; Jean-Luc Godard; in French, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ June 18 at 2:30 and 5:30: "Walkover" (1965; Jerzy Skolimowski; in Polish, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ June 19 at 2:30 and 5:30: "The Rise of Louis XIV" (1966; Roberto Rossellini). . . . ¶ June 20 at 3: "Blackmail" (1929; Alfred Hitchcock; a silent film), with Anny Ondra, Sara Allgood, and Cyril Ritchard. . . . ¶ June 20 at 6:30: "Ganga Bruta" (1933; Humberto Mauro; in Portuguese, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ June 21 at 3: "La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc" (1928; Carl Theodor Dreyer; a silent film, with Danish intertitles). . . . ¶ June 21 at 6:30: "Thin Ice" (1928; Jens Uwe Krafft; a silent film, with English intertitles).

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015)—The final program in a series of comedy films. June 17 at 6:30 and 8:30: "Kakita Akanishi" (1936; Mansaku Itami; in Japanese, with English subtitles), with Chiezo Kataoka.

Collective for Living Cinema, 41 White St. (925-2111)—June 13 at 8: "Pigpen" (1970; Pier Paolo Pasolini; in Italian, with English subtitles), with Ugo Tognazzi and Jean-Pierre Léaud. . . . ¶ June 14 at 8: "The Cavern" (1966; Edgar G. Ulmer), with Rosanna Schiaffino, John Saxon, Brian Aherne, and Larry Hagman. . . . ¶ June 15 at 8: A program of films by George Méliès, from 1899 to 1912; and "The Loom" (1987; Stan Brakhage). . . . ¶ June 16 at 8: "Mother Kusters Goes to Heaven" (1975; Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ June 17 at 8: A program of films by Larry Kucharz. . . . ¶ June 18-19 at 8: Two different programs of documentary videotapes produced through Downtown Community Television. . . . ¶ June 20 at 8: "The Decameron" (1970; Pier Paolo Pasolini; in Italian, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ June 21 at 8: "The Black Cat" (1934; Edgar G. Ulmer), with Boris Karloff and Bela Lugosi. . . . ¶ June 22 at 8: "The End" (1953; Chris Maclaine), "Murder Psalm" (1981; Stan Brakhage), "Red Nightmare" (1957), and an episode of "The Manhattan Love Suicides" (1985; Richard Kern).

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(Unsigned notes are by Pauline Kael; others are by Terrence Rafferty.)

Au Revoir les Enfants (Goodbye, Children)—It's set in Occupied France in 1944, when the writer-director Louis Malle was an eleven-year-old at a Catholic boys' boarding school near Fontainebleau that sheltered several Jewish boys. The Gestapo learned they were there, and sent the ones they found to Auschwitz, and the headmaster to a work camp. One of the Jewish boys was in Malle's class, but Malle didn't get to know him well and didn't realize that he was Jewish. For the dramatic purposes of the movie, he has conceived a close friendship between his alter ego, the fair-haired Julien Quentin (Gaspard Manesse), and the dark boy who is using the false name Jean Bonnet (Raphaël Fejtö). But nothing comes into clear focus—not the boys' attitudes, not even the images. The film (especially the first half) seems padded, formal, discreet. It's like watching a faded French classic. And there's something unseemly about the way Jean is used as an aesthetic object—spiritual, sensitive, exotic. With Francine Racette as Julien's mother and François Négret as the informer. In French. (Reviewed in our issue of 2/22/88.) (Quad Cinema, and Festival.)

Babette's Feast—In a village on Denmark's gray, blustery Jutland peninsula, sometime in the eighteen-eighties, Babette (Stéphane Audran), the French servant of a pair of elderly unmarried sisters (Birgitte Federspiel and Bodil Kjer), prepares a special dinner for her employers and their guests—a lavish, one-time-only orgy of haute cuisine served to a group of devout Lutherans who are used to receiving the Lord's bounty in the form of grim little slabs of boiled fish. Adapting one of Isak Dinesen's "Anecdotes of Destiny," Gabriel Axel, the writer-director, tells this simple tale simply. He establishes a lulling, bedtime-story tone right from the start, perhaps too successfully: our eyelids begin to seem very heavy after twenty minutes or so. The whole thing turns out to be about the consolations of art, and the union of "righteousness and bliss." The film is more righteous than blissful: a more austere celebration of the pleasures of the senses would be difficult to imagine. In Danish and French. —T.R. (Cinema Studio.)

Bagdad Café—After an argument with her husband on a godforsaken stretch of highway at the edge of the Mojave Desert, a fat German tourist named Jasmin (Marianne Sägebrecht) checks into a crummy motel attached to the equally crummy Bagdad Café. This movie, the first in English by the German director Percy Adlon (whose 1985 "Sugarbaby" was also a vehicle for Sägebrecht), is filled with eccentrics who are apparently meant to be lovable. The rather precious conceit of the film is that Jasmin somehow brings the outcast characters together in a kind of extended family; by the end, the Bagdad Café has been transformed into a popular roadside cabaret, with everyone contributing a specialty (Jasmin does magic tricks). The American performers are trapped in a movie that treats them as merely exotic—waxwork grotesques waiting to be animated by a mysterious German touch. Eleonore Adlon and Christopher Doherty collaborated with the director on the screenplay. With CCH Pounder, Jack Palance, and Christine Kaufmann.—T.R. (Lincoln Plaza.)

Beetlejuice—Set in an idyllic New England town, this farce about the afterlife is a variant on "Topper" (1937) and "The Old Dark House" (1932). A devoted, home-loving young couple (Alec Baldwin and Geena Davis) are drowned in a car accident, and when they return to their house as ghosts they are miffed by the redecorating of the New Yorkers who have bought it. Too mild to scare these intruders away, they call upon the services of the rutty little demon Betelgeuse (pronounced Beetlejuice). Michael Keaton plays the part, and his uninhibited comic performance is like an exploding head. He isn't onscreen nearly enough—when he is, he shoots the film sky-high. The story is bland and the movie is slow to get going, but with crazy comedy you settle for the moments of inspiration, and this picture has them. The young director, Tim Burton, takes stabs into the irrational and the incongruous; the film's blandness is edged with near-genius (and some great special effects). The smudge-faced blond Catherine O'Hara, who's the possessor of the freakiest blue-eyed stare since early Gene Wilder, is brilliant as the madwoman who is the new lady of the house. (4/18/88) (Olympia; through June 16.)

Candy Mountain—Rudy Wurlitzer wrote the screenplay of this low-budget road movie and directed it in collaboration with Robert Frank. It's the story of a dim, unsuccessful young New York musician (Kevin J. O'Connor) who makes a deal with a rock star (David Johansen) and a couple of guys in business suits to track down a brilliant guitar-maker named Elmore Silk (Harris Yulin): the idea, of course, is to acquire his guitars, commodities that have become rare and fantastically valuable since Silk's disappearance from the scene years ago. On his journey through upstate New York and eastern Canada, the eager punk loses a couple of cars, spends all his money, gets arrested, trades observations on the romance of the road and the meaning of life with an assortment of oddballs, losers, freaks, and geezers, and

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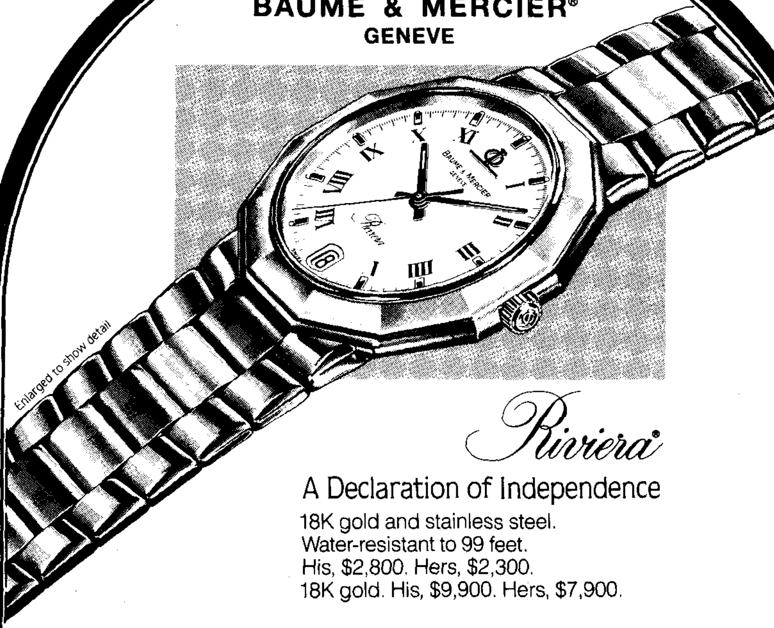

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

IN BRIEF—Cont'd

eventually finds the great man holed up in a town in Nova Scotia, where the whole eventful quest turns out to be—surprise—sort of meaningless. This may sound dreary—particularly if you remember the stoned existentialism of Wurlitzer's previous contribution to the genre, "Two-Lane Blacktop" (1971), which was directed by Monte Hellman—and it's certainly thin, but the movie has a surprisingly genial spirit. Frank, a great photographer ("The Americans") who has also made *several 16-mm. films, knows how to shoot the* cramped bungalows, the unvacuumed cars, the gas stations, and the country-and-Western dives of his seedy roadside landscape so that we don't feel oppressed by the bleakness of it all. Working with the cinematographer Pio Corradi, he keeps startling us, offhandedly, with the beauty of thrown-together places and lives. The lively cast also includes Roberts Blossom and an eclectic bunch of musicians: Tom Waits, Leon Redbone, Dr. John, and Rita MacNeil. Only Laurie Metcalf (overacting) and Bulle Ogier (struggling with her English) seem out of place.—T.R. (Quad Cinema.)

DRAGON CHOW—This first film by the German director Jan Schutte is a low-key vignette about a pair of immigrants, one Pakistani and one Chinese, trying to open a restaurant in Hamburg. The movie is almost unbelievably modest: it's shot in black-and-white; it's only seventy-five minutes long; and the script, by the director and Thomas Strittmatter, confines itself to a handful of clearly defined characters and a couple of simple issues. All Schutte seems to want is to show us how Asian workers survive—or fail to—on the margins of Europe's economy: they take jobs as flower peddlers and kitchen helpers, live in seedy dormitories, hold on to the comfort of their native languages, and fear the whims of immigration officers. "Dragon *Chow" is just good enough to make us wish* that Schutte were a little more adventurous, that this thin slice of life would occasionally surprise us with a fresh sensation, a hint of exotic flavors. With Bhasker (as the Pakistani), Ric Young (as his Chinese partner), and Buddy Uzzaman. The lovely cinematography is by Lutz Konermann. In German, Mandarin, Urdu, and Sanskrit. (Subtitles appear only when the characters speak German.)—T.R. (Lincoln Plaza; through June 16.)

HAIRSPRAY—With Divine, directed by John Waters. (3/7/88) (Waverly.)

THE KILLERS (1946)—Ernest Hemingway's short story about the man who doesn't try to escape his killers is acted out tensely and accurately, and, for once, the gangster-thriller material added to it is not just padding but is shrewdly conceived (by Anthony Veiller and the uncredited John Huston) to show why the man didn't care enough about life to run away. Under the expert direction of Robert Siodmak, Burt Lancaster gives his first screen performance (and is startlingly effective), and Siodmak also does wonders with Ava Gardner. (Public Theatre.)

THE LAST EMPEROR—With John Lone, directed by Bernardo Bertolucci. (11/30/87) (Eastside Cinema, and 57th St. Playhouse. . . . ¶ 8th St. Playhouse; through June 16.)

THE MILAGRO BEANFIELD WAR—The story is about *a conflict over water rights in New Mexico* between the struggling Hispanic community and a bunch of powerful developers who are buying up the surrounding land. Robert Redford's film of John Nichols' novel treats the material as an occasion for Capra-like populist comedy, and the feel-good, triumph-of-the-little-guy stuff overwhelms the jokes—the same thing often happened to Capra, who knew how to direct comedy, so it's not a surprise that it also happens to Redford, who doesn't. But he's assembled a lively, talented cast here, and their little bits of business keep the movie watchable. John Heard, Rubén Blades, Julie Carmen, James Gammon, Daniel Stern, and M. Emmet Walsh all seem to be having a good time, and Redford's direction is best when it simply relaxes and lets their vitality carry the movie. Also with Chick Vennera, Sonia Braga, Richard Bradford, Carlos Riquelme, and Christopher

Walken. Adapted by Nichols and David Ward.—T.R. (Coronet, and Metro Cinema; through June 16.)

The Moderns—The big subject of Alan Rudolph's new movie, a comic reverie on Americans in Paris in the twenties, may have got the better of him: the tough-guy romanticism is ridiculous, the jokes are self-conscious and mostly dumb, and Rudolph's eccentric vision seems not so much audacious as merely adolescent. The few sequences that show the director at his best are ones without dialogue: a boxing match between the down-and-out artist-hero (Keith Carradine) and a rich, evil art collector (John Lone), and a lovely montage in which Carradine forges a Cézanne, a Modigliani, and a Matisse. Despite these moments, and despite Carradine's finely shaded performance, the movie feels phony. With Linda Fiorentino, badly miscast as an elegant siren desired by both Carradine and Lone, and Geraldine Chaplin, Geneviève Bujold, Wallace Shawn, and Kevin J. O'Connor, as a callow, aphorizing Hemingway. Script by Rudolph and Jon Bradshaw.—T.R. (Plaza; through June 16. . . . ¶ Quad Cinema; starting June 17.)

Moonstruck—A rose-tinted black comedy, with its own special lushness. Cher is devastatingly funny and sinuous and beautiful as a widowed bookkeeper who lives with her Italian-American family in a big old brownstone in Brooklyn. When the bookkeeper and her fiancé's brother, a baker (Nicolas Cage), start lusting for one another, a fairy-tale full moon lights up the movie. And when you see that the whole cast of family members are involved in libidinal confusions the opera-buffa structure can make you feel close to deliriously happy. Cage is a wonderful romantic clown: he can look stupefied while he smolders. And the director, Norman Jewison, working from John Patrick Shanley's script, stylizes the ethnic performances given by the husky-voiced Olympia Dukakis, the great, leering Julie Bovasso, Vincent Gardenia, Danny Aiello, John Mahoney, and Anita Gillette. The picture is slender, but it's an original: its mockery is a giddy homage to our desire for grand passion. (1/25/88) (Gemini. . . . ¶ Olympia; through June 16.)

The Nutty Professor (1963)—Jerry Lewis in a Jekyll-and-Hyde story that provides him with one of the best gimmicks of his career: as Julius Kelp, he's a shy, clumsy chemistry professor, a simp with specs and rabbity teeth, but when he drinks his formula he turns into a brash, domineering hipster singer named Buddy Love—i.e., a cartoon of Dean Martin. Working within this format, he has some scenes that can hold their own with the classic silent comedies. The picture is very erratic, and it's too long and repetitive. Directed by Lewis, who also wrote the script (with Bill Richmond). With Stella Stevens, Kathleen Freeman, Howard Morris, Henry Gibson, and Les Brown and his band. (Thalia SoHo; June 21.)

The Presidio—This loud, lame thriller is set in San Francisco, in and around the Presidio Army base. An M.P. is killed when she stumbles onto a break-in at the Officers' Club, and the murder investigation turns into a clash of wills between a rigid Lieutenant Colonel (Sean Connery) and an impetuous young homicide cop (Mark Harmon). As if that weren't drama enough—Harmon, we learn, was once an M.P. under Connery's command (they hated each other), and in the course of the movie he falls in love with the Lieutenant Colonel's wild and adorable daughter (Meg Ryan). The screenwriter, Larry Ferguson, and the director, Peter Hyams, obviously think that it's been far too long since we've seen cars bouncing through the streets of San Francisco at high speeds; or a testy relationship between a by-the-book old-timer and a hotheaded younger man resolving itself in grudging admiration; or shootouts in which the bad guys fire endless rounds and miss while the heroes' bullets are finding their marks with Zen-like accuracy. They're wrong. Also with Jack Warden and Mark Blum.—T.R. (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, U. A. East, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy.)

A Royal Scandal (1945)—Tallulah Bankhead gave this sex farce about Catherine the Great a sort of low glitter, but it's not much of a vehicle. She does wonders with a few line readings, and the fine young actor William Eythe (he died two years later) has some splendid comic moments with her. The cast includes Charles Coburn, Anne Baxter, Vin-

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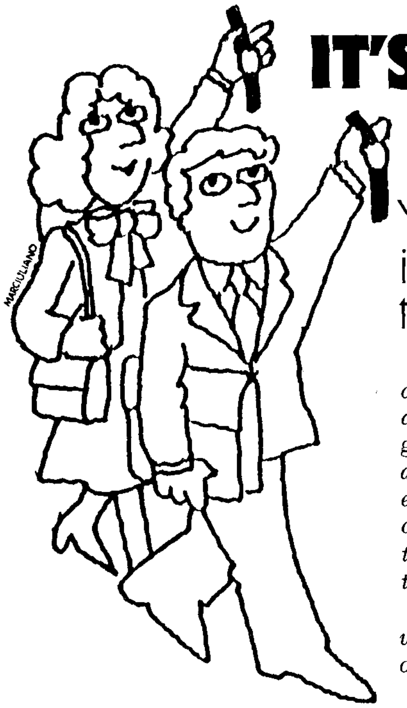

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IN BRIEF—Cont'd

cent Price, Sig Rumann, and Mischa Auer. The script, which is marred by horseplay and dumb wisecracks, is by Edwin Justus Mayer; directed by Otto Preminger. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; June 21.)

Stand and Deliver—Strictly speaking, this educational-inspiration story about a wizardly math teacher in a poor East L.A. high school isn't much of a movie: it's clumsily directed (by Ramon Menendez) and predictably virtuous (it's an American Playhouse production). Yet it's fairly enjoyable—painless, at least. The screenplay, by Menendez and Tom Musca, is based on the true story of Jaime Escalante (Edward James Olmos), who arrived at dispirited Garfield High, which was on the brink of losing its accreditation, and managed to get his students excited about learning his subject—an entire class of these disadvantaged kids eventually took and passed the advanced-placement exam in calculus. Olmos, who's best known as the supercool Lt. Castillo on "Miami Vice," does a spectacular turn. With thinning hair and a wardrobe of those grotesque shirts that scream "math teacher" to the world, he plays Escalante as a benign psycho, an impassioned nerd whose humor and energy are plausibly inspiring. Also with Lou Diamond Phillips, Rosana de Soto, and Andy Garcia.—T.R. (Metro Cinema; through June 16.)

Stormy Monday—This first feature by the British director Mike Figgis is the sort of thriller that's usually called "stylish"—perhaps because it doesn't have much substance. Roger Deakins' cinematography is heavy on *noir*-ish atmosphere—rain-slick streets, neon signs, gloomy bars—and Figgis, who also wrote the screenplay, has given the characters a familiar aura of low expectations and weary integrity. He isn't a bad director, but the movie doesn't have a potent enough sense of *danger:* the hero and heroine (Sean Bean and Melanie Griffith) seem too young to have developed the properly resigned, don't-give-a-damn attitude, the self-destructive edge that really makes us fear for *noir* protagonists; and the villain (Tommy Lee Jones), though ruthless and mean, lacks the obsessive quality that would convince us that he'd track his enemies for the rest of their lives, for the sheer fun of exacting his revenge. Sting, of all people, gives the liveliest performance (as a harried night-club owner).—T.R. (Quad Cinema.)

Tampopo (1986)—With Nobuko Miyamoto and Tsutomu Yamazaki, directed by Juzo Itami. In Japanese. (6/1/87) (Bleecker St. Cinema.)

Tarnished Lady (1931)—Limp. George Cukor's first directorial solo, Tallulah Bankhead's first talkie, and a flop for both. Donald Ogden Stewart shaped the script for Bankhead (from his story "New York Lady"), and it was conceived on the elegant model of her stage successes; she's a socialite who marries Clive Brook for money and is torn when she falls in love with a Greenwich Village writer (Alexander Kirkland). But the Bankhead of tubercular hollows and soigné sagging posture who had become a stage idol was never to become popular in movies. And you can see why. As Cukor has said, "She had beautiful bones, but her eyes were not eyes for movies. They looked somehow hooded and dead. . . . Her smile didn't illuminate." (Theatre 80 St. Marks; June 21.)

A Taxing Woman—The third film written and directed by Juzo Itami is his first dull one. It's a comedy about tax evasion, pitting a dishonest and very clever businessman (Tsutomu Yamazaki) against the awesome forces of Japan's national tax office, whose relentless spirit is most purely incarnated in a tiny, dogged female inspector named Mrs. Itakura (Nobuko Miyamoto). This sounds like fun, but, despite some clever notions and a handful of inventive scenes, the movie feels tentative, not fully worked out; it's as if Itami got bogged down in research and forgot about the jokes. For whatever reason, "A Taxing Woman" is much more conventional than the director's previous films, "The Funeral" and "Tampopo." In Japanese.—T.R. (Lincoln Plaza.)

The Unbearable Lightness of Being—With Daniel Day-Lewis, Lena Olin, and Juliette Binoche; directed by Philip Kaufman. (2/8/88) (68th St. Playhouse. . . . ¶ 23rd St. West Triplex; through June 14. . . . ¶ Columbia Cinema; through June 21.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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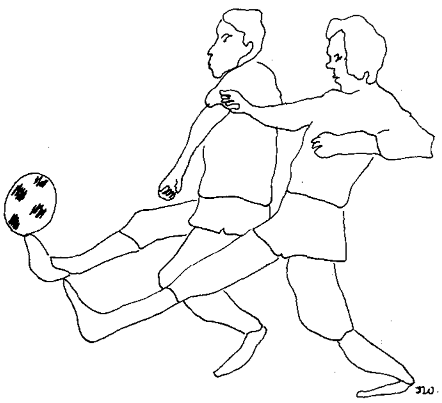
Welcome in Vienna—Axel Corti's film, the final installment of a trilogy called "Where To and Back," is about the condition of Austria immediately after the Second World War. In its restrained way, it's a devastating portrait of a culture without values. The hero, Freddy Wolff (Gabriel Barylli), a young Viennese Jew who emigrated to the United States in 1938 and is now returning to his home city as part of the American occupation forces, wanders through a landscape of cynicism, opportunism, and unrepentant anti-Semitism. It's as if he were seeing the city of his youth for the first time, and recognizing that all the qualities he (and we) thinks of as "Viennese"—worldliness, irony, an air of cultural superiority—are thin, insubstantial, like layers of flaky pastry with nothing nourishing inside. The screenplay, by Corti and Georg Stefan Troller (who based Freddy's experiences on his own), is lucid and intelligent, and the movie sustains a disquieting mood of compromise and grinning corruption. The direction, however, is ponderous. Corti seems to share his young hero's earnestness and dogged naïveté: we get the idea very early and become, unfortunately, impatient with both Freddy's reluctance to understand and the director's refusal to vary the tone. The movie has the odd effect of shocking us without ever having really surprised us. With Nicolas Brieger, Claudia Messner, and Karlheinz Hackl. Filmed in black-and-white by Gernot Roll. In German and English.—T.R. (Film Forum; through June 14.)

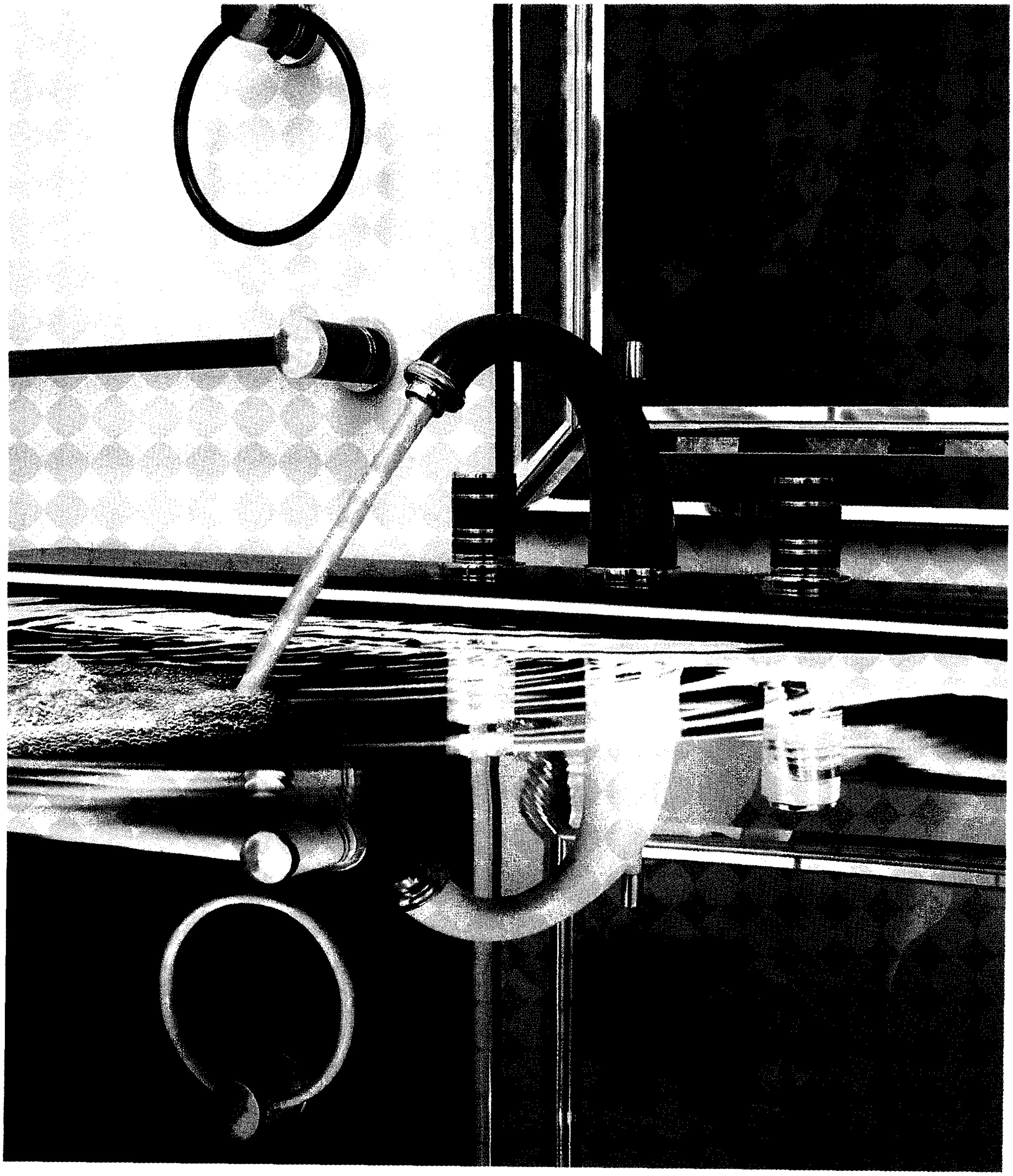
White Mischief—At first, Michael Radford's film about upper-class English settlers in Kenya in the nineteen-forties seems bracingly sardonic: there isn't a hint of the sneaky romanticism and nostalgia for Empire that colonial dramas so frequently succumb to. As one aristocratic viper after another is introduced, and each member of the large and familiar cast (Greta Scacchi, Charles Dance, Joss Ackland, Sarah Miles, John Hurt, Trevor Howard, Geraldine Chaplin) makes his distinctively peculiar entrance, the movie promises to be wicked fun. Amazingly, though, as the action gets nastier the picture gets duller. The screenplay, by Radford and Jonathan Gems, is based on the real-life murder of Josslyn Hay, Earl of Errol (Dance), a colonial Casanova who conducted a flagrant affair with young Lady Diana Broughton (Scacchi), to which their jaded social set reacted with a mixture of amusement and jealousy. As the movie concentrates more and more on the unsavory triangle of Errol, Diana, and her creepy middle-aged husband (Ackland), we begin to get the uneasy feeling that the director has lost track of his own intentions. For all the melodramatic complications, the characters remain static, as if they'd been frozen in place after their initial scenes.—T.R. (Art Greenwich Twin, and Carnegie Hall Cinema.)



Willow—The evil sorceress Queen Bavmorda (Jean Marsh) is killing all the newborn babies in the Daikini domain, because of a prophecy that an infant born with a special mark will bring about her downfall. Placed on a raft of rushes, the savior baby girl drifts downriver into the land of a peaceful, elflike people, the Nelwyns. A young Nelwyn farmer, Willow (Warwick Davis), tries to protect her, and eventually, with the help of an outlaw Daikini swordsman (Val Kilmer) and a rebel Daikini (Gavan O'Herlihy), Willow storms the evil queen's black castle. This tale involves trolls, vicious black boars, nine-inch-tall men called Brownies, platinum-wigged Tinker Bells, a two-headed dragon, and some four hundred special-effects shots. Before it's over, you feel as if you'd fallen into a pile of mixed metaphors. Produced by George Lucas, who also wrote the story, the movie seems to be one stale idea after another. The director, Ron Howard, shows his gentle talent only in his handling of the three-foot-four-inch Willow, whose sweet-faced humility could make parts of the movie appealing to kids. With Billy Barty—triumphant as usual—as the High Aldwin of the Nelwyns. (5/30/88) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews Tower East, Guild, and Loews Paramount.)

Wings of Desire ("Der Himmel über Berlin")—The director, Wim Wenders, who wrote the script with the collaboration of Peter Handke, had a theme: in an approximation of Rilke's words, "Joy has gone astray." We're told that "when the child was a child," stories held together. Now all we have is fragmentation, entropy. Two angels—Damiel (Bruno Ganz) and Cassiel (Otto Sander)—hover over the bleak, divided city and move among the forlorn Berliners, listening to what's in their minds: listening to the questions about existence that these people ask themselves. Our overhearing what the angels hear—the thoughts chanted on the track, all in even, quiet tones, as grayed out as the sunless skies—works on us like a tranquillizer. Eventually, Damiel falls in love with a beautiful French aerialist (Solveig Dommartin), and gives up his wings. With Peter Falk, who brings some funky warmth to the role of an American movie star, and Curt Bois as a sad-faced old man called Homer. The cinematography (tinted black-and-white, and color) is by Henri Alekan. This Franco-German production is in English, French, and German. (5/30/88) (Cinema Studio.)

A World Apart—Set in 1963, it's about a thirteen-year-old girl (Jodhi May), who lives a well-ordered, ruling-class life in a fine home in suburban Johannesburg until her father (Jeroen Krabbé), who's a Communist, flees the country in the middle of the night to escape arrest, and her mother (Barbara Hershey), the editor of a small anti-apartheid newspaper, is "detained" for ninety days, and then another ninety days. Based on a semi-autobiographical script by Shawn Slovo, the daughter of the journalist Ruth First and Joe Slovo, the leader of the banned South African Communist Party, the movie deals with the girl's feeling confused and resentful, because her parents have never explained anything to her—they've treated her like a baby. Forced to grow up, she perceives the ugliness of apartheid, and wants to join in the fight against it, yet that fight is also her competitor. In prison or out, her mother is not all there for her. When the girl needs her mom, she bashes her head against a principled person. The theme of the movie is the conflict between fighting injustice and what we owe to our families—or, more poignantly, a young girl's pain at the loss of her mother and father, though she knows the reason for it. Shot in Zimbabwe, this remarkable first feature directed by the noted cinematographer Chris Menges (pronounced men-ghees) has a visual snap to it. It's luminous yet very informal. And though, toward the end, it falls into chanting slogans, it has a radiant intelligence. The cast includes Linda Mvusi, who shared the best-actress award at Cannes with May and Hershey, and Tim Roth, Yvonne Bryceland, Albee Lesotho, David Suchet, and Nadine Chalmers. (6/13/88) (Cinema I; starting June 17.)



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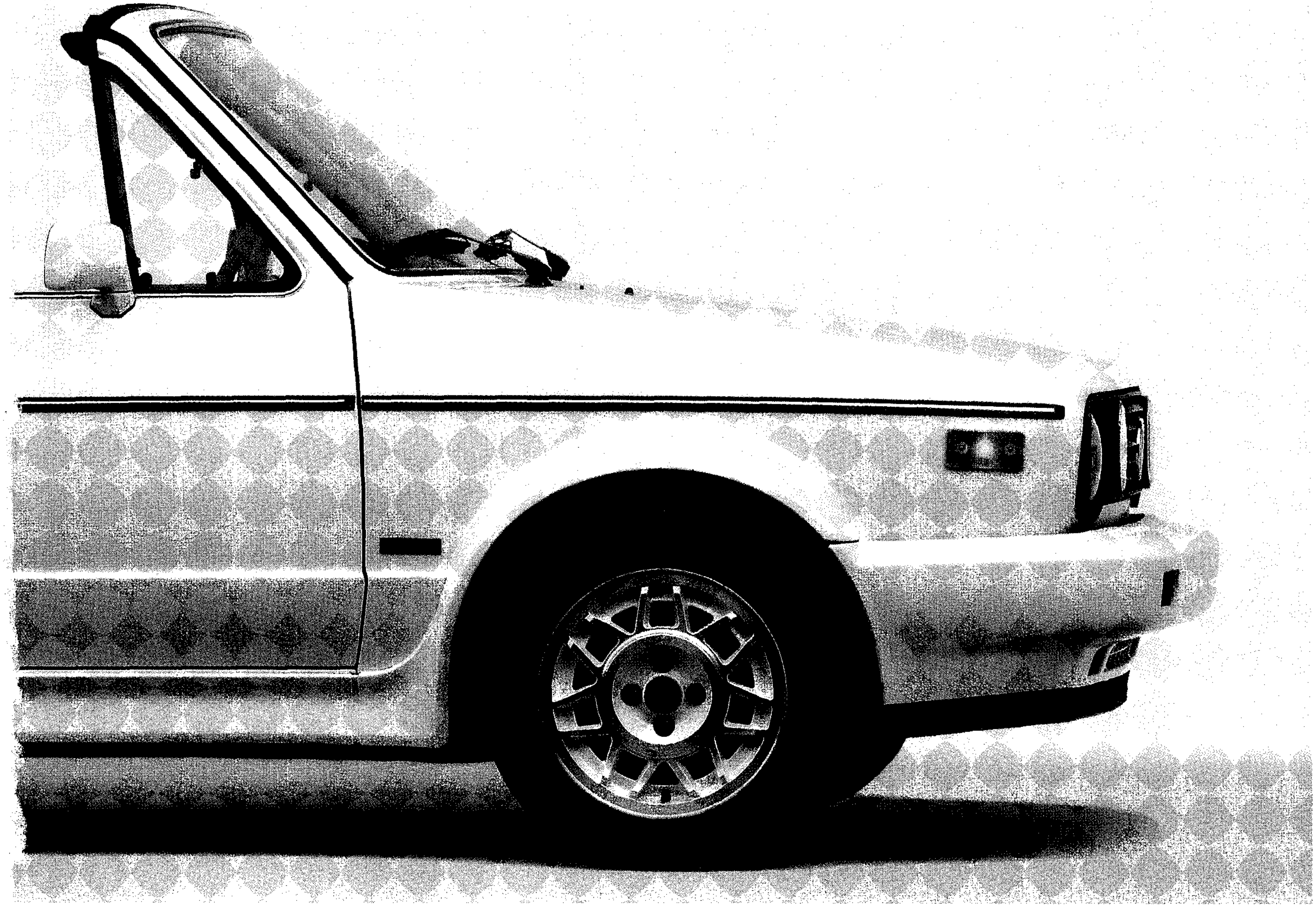

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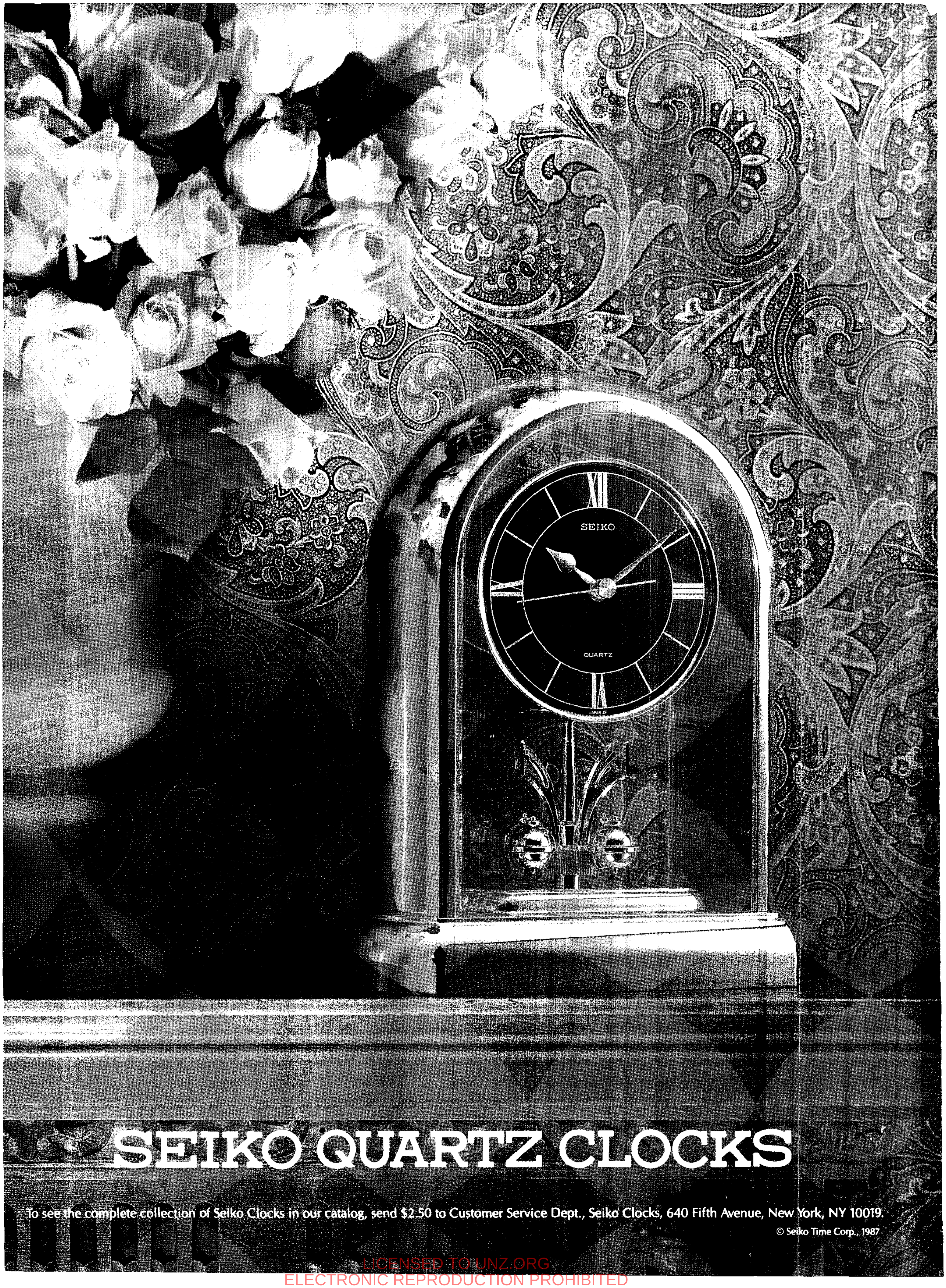

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THE
NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

IN some African countries, the fighting stopped with the coming of independence. In others, the fighting started with it. In Angola, the fighting started in the early nineteen-sixties, long before independence from Portugal, and it has never stopped. Today, to the extent that we Americans think of Angola at all, most of us probably think of it only as a war-ravaged land where a beleaguered central government, supported by Cuba and the Soviet Union, is fighting a seemingly endless struggle against a "moderate" guerrilla group supported by South Africa and the United States. In actuality, Angola is a political anomaly. The United States has never recognized the Angolan government and actively aids its enemy, the UNITA guerrilla group, headed by Jonas Savimbi; yet the United States is Angola's principal trading partner. The Chevron Corporation's oil facilities in northern Angola—owned together with the Angolan government and an Italian company—are one of the largest American investments in black Africa, and by all accounts the Angolan government has treated the American oil people fairly. On one occasion, Cuban-backed Angolan-government troops defended the oil facilities against an attack by South African commandos.

We were reminded of these facts the other day when we dropped in on Maria Eugenia Neto at her New York hotel. Mrs. Neto is the widow of Angola's first President, Agostinho Neto—a poet and physician, who was born in Angola in 1922 and died in 1979 while undergoing treatment for cancer in Moscow. She is a small, handsome Portuguese woman in her mid-fifties, soft-spoken but clearly strong-minded, who had just arrived for a two-week visit to the United States. She planned to talk about Angolan politics, of course, but that wasn't exactly the purpose of her visit. She is the honorary vice-president of an organization called the Children's Fund for Southern Africa, and she was here to press the point that the South African-backed guerrilla wars raging in Angola and in another former Portuguese colony, Mozambique, are having a devastating effect on the children of those countries—not to mention their elders. She cited a UNICEF report, published last year, that in 1986 more than a hundred and forty thousand children in Angola and Mozambique died from "war and destabilization-related causes," and that "every four minutes, a small Angolan or Mozambican child was lost who would otherwise have lived."

We told her we had heard that in Luanda, Angola's capital, one often sees civilians who have lost arms or legs from land-mine explosions.

"That is true," she said, speaking with the help of a translator. "And if you go only six miles from the city you see the roads full of handicapped people. If you go to the military hospital, in the center of town, you feel a great horror. When I go there, I have no words to say to the victims when I see how badly injured they are."

We asked her if the fighting had directly affected her life in Luanda.

She said that it had not. "These days, I am gathering the papers and memories of my husband, and I write children's books," she said. "I have three children of my own. My son, twenty-eight, is an aircraft engineer, one daughter is a doctor of medicine, and my other daughter is studying economics." She showed us two of her books, which were recently published in Portugal. "This one is about a girl who comes from a different planet," she explained. "She has been brought to earth by cosmonauts. Oh, it's just to entertain children with beauty and magic, and perhaps to teach a little about astronomy. And this one is a story about a boy and his dog. His bedroom serves as a space rocket. He travels everywhere, and his grandmother explains everything to him. They are really at home, but they are imagining the world." Sometimes she writes stories about the war. One of her favorites is a true story about the donkeys that were used by her husband's guerrilla force to carry arms and supplies during the fight for independence in the early sixties. "The donkeys became almost human to us," she said. "They learned to distinguish between our guerrillas and the Portuguese soldiers, and they even tried to imitate our men and camouflage themselves, or so we thought. The people loved them."

d. ehrenberg

Mrs. Neto said that she and her husband were married in Lisbon on the day he graduated from medical school, in 1958. The following year, they moved to Luanda, and he went into practice there as a gynecologist and also opened a clinic in the slums.

We asked her if it had been difficult for her, as a white European, to be accepted in Angolan society.

"My husband's family and friends welcomed me warmly," she said. "Later, during the war for independence, I was more aware of the differences. Angolan people didn't understand how I, a Portuguese, could be the wife of the leader of a group that was fighting for independence. What were my real feelings, they wondered. The fact is, I was for justice, and because I was for justice I knew I was not betraying my people."

In 1960, Agostinho Neto was arrested for political activity and sent to prison in Portugal. His wife went back to Portugal and did what she could to create public pressure for his release. Eventually, he managed to escape and, with his wife, made his way to Tanzania. The Netos did not return to Angola until the time of independence, in 1975. "Yes, it was very difficult," she said of the years in exile, during which her husband was travelling widely, running his guerrilla organization by remote control while he sought foreign support. "He was away most of the time. I went so often to the airport to wait for him to return that even today when I go to an airport I feel something strange inside."

We asked her which part of her life she recalled most fondly.

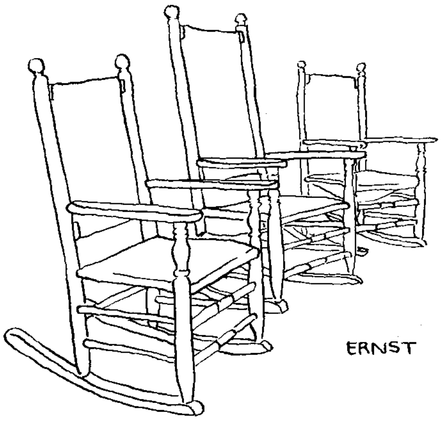
"Probably the first year of our marriage," she said, "when there was no war." She has recently helped arrange for a new edition of her husband's poems, "Sacred Hope," and has collected some unpublished poems and speeches for a second volume. "He wrote the poetry only before independence," she said. "Afterward, only speeches. After independence, there was no time for poetry."

• •

Just Visiting

At about eight-forty-five on a recent Saturday morning, two Department of Correction vans left Rikers Island and began the long drive to the department's headquarters, on Hudson Street, in Lower Manhattan. The first van carried Melzeta McAlman, the head dietitian of the Rikers Island Hospital, and three of her cooks. It also carried twenty-five curried chickens; a hundred portions of Hungarian noodles; four cases of green beans lyonnaise; a health salad made of six heads of lettuce and more than eighteen pounds of other vegetables; two twenty-four-inch pans of peach crisp; and about six gallons of Hawaiian Tea (iced tea mixed with pineapple juice and sugar). Melzeta McAlman had quietly explained to the van crew before they set out that if they happened to hit a pothole and upset her food they should just turn around and take her back to Rikers, because she was going to kill whoever was responsible. Her van maintained a wary, stately cruising speed of twenty miles an hour all the way in to Manhattan. The second van carried Edwardo Velasquez, the food-service manager of the Adolescent Detention Center on Rikers, his crew of five cooks, and realizations of several of his epic recipes, most of which end, dramatically, "Yield: One Hundred Servings." The dishes in the van included Marinated Chicken, Chicken L'Pineapple, Chicken L'Orange, and Pork Chops L'Pineapple. Melzeta and Edwardo and their staffs had been up since two in the morning, cooking (they'd also had to cook and serve the inmates' dinner the night before), and they were on their way in to Manhattan as the finalists in a competition designed to establish who in the New York City correction system was supreme in the art of entertaining people for whom, as Melzeta puts it, "you know it's nothing personal, but they'd just as soon be having dinner someplace else."

The Big House Cooking Contest, to give the event its full title, is the latest attempt of the Correction Department to change—or, anyway, adjust—its image. Because the department manages eighteen separate correctional facilities—including the six "mega-jails" on Rikers Island, which constitute the largest penal colony in North America—many New Yorkers have the impression that the Department of Correction is mostly jails, maybe even *just* jails. But the Department of Correction is more than just jails. That, in fact, is its official motto: "We're More Than Just Jails." When officials of the department (who tend to be broad-faced, weary-looking men in stiff sports coats) are pressed, they admit that the non-jail aspects of their work are still, as one said on Saturday, "jail-compatible"—standing guard in a courtroom, for instance, over people who have been in jail that morning and are going back to jail that night. When these officials are particularly discouraged about their image, they cheer themselves up with the thought that, at least, nobody thinks they're just prisons. This is a point that the commissioner, Richard Koehler, often makes. "A jail," he has said in many speeches, "is not a prison." A prison is where you're sent when you've been sentenced to a year or more; a jail is where you're sent when you are serving a relatively short sentence or are just waiting to go on trial. The Mayor, in a recent column for *Correction News*, the department's newsletter, pointed out proudly that "jails are much more dynamic places." This dynamism is reflected in things like the Big House Cooking Contest and the ambitious new décor in the hall of the Correction Department headquarters. The hall is hung with what must be the most beautifully framed photographs in all New York. Each photograph is bordered by an "antique" gold frame and a tawny fabric mat; inside the mat are a second, slimmer gold frame and two more mats, one soft green and the other Rembrandt brown. Within the last mat are the photographs—mostly of guys in jail.



By eleven o'clock, Melzeta, setting up in a room at one end of the hall, had arranged her food in chafing dishes and on trays and was laying out her menus. Melzeta's earliest memory is of baking a cake with her mother. "My philosophy of cooking began with my mother," she told a reporter. "She taught me to bake, and I still love it—that's why I fancy that nice peach crisp. Then I attended Hunter College, and got my master's in nutrition in the early eighties. I thought that institutional cooking was a way of spreading a little love. I worked at Kings County Hospital for a while, and then I heard that there was an opening in Correction. I thought it sounded like something different."

The reporter happened to be doing some investigative work on Melzeta's peach crisp and asked her if there was lemon in it.

"I do fancy lemon," she said softly.

"Arianna Stassinopoulos Huffington should write a book about you!"

• •

"Not so as to make it tart, though. That's something you'll find in a lot of my cooking. I like gentle flavors, and gentle seasonings. Something soft. That's a daily challenge—to keep your food homey and loving when you're cooking for so many unhappy people. I like to believe that if I can just cook something wonderful, then maybe somebody won't feel so bad about being in jail. Maybe they'll feel for a minute like they were 'just visiting'—you know, like in Monopoly."

At the other end of the hall, Edwardo was setting up his own chafing dishes and lecturing one of his cooks. "Now, listen, man, you hear that crackle?" he said, referring to a noise that one of his aluminum pans was making. "She's telling you she's too hot. 'Take me off! More water!' Man, you got to listen to your pan—she's talking to you." Edwardo has never been to college or studied nutrition. His earliest memory is of killing a chicken with his mother. "My mom and me, we get that thing, strangle it, pull out its feathers," he said. "She's a great cook, my mom. My first job was at a pizzeria at a Hundred and Tenth Street and Madison Avenue. They did pizza, but they had a *mamacita* in the back there cooking Spanish food. That's the way I learned my seasonings. Then I applied for a job at the Manhattan House of Detention—the old Tombs—and that's where I learned my recipes and techniques. Man, the Tombs was a cooking college and a half. Bulk cooking. That's where I learned when to put in your breasts, when to put in your legs, when to add your ingredients, when to add your water, when to put in the final touches. When I got to Rikers, I got it all together. Some of those Spanish seasonings, some bulk techniques—that's my style. I have a one-word secret for jailhouse cooking: marinate. Like my steak-in-the-vat—that's institutional steak, maybe, but if you marinate it right . . . The guy who can do that, he can cook a little."

Edwardo has no illusions about the power of his food to turn any detained adolescent's mind to better and higher things. "You don't go to a restaurant to do time, and you don't go to jail to eat," he said. "But if you're going to do a job, you do a job, and if you're not going to do a job, you don't do a job. I don't care whether it's the Eiffel Tower or Rikers Island. You're a cook, you cook."

Someone asked him if he was at all worried about the challenge of Melzeta McAlman, down the hall.

"No, man," he answered. "I'm not even going down the hall to look. We're friends. She can cook a little."

One of his assistants, though, came up to a reporter who had just been down the hall to see Melzeta's table, and asked, "What they got back there for dessert?"

Peach crisp, the reporter told him.

The assistant looked puzzled. "Peach crisp? Like a *cobbler*?"

The reporter told him "Yeah, sort of."

"*Peach cobbler*," the assistant repeated contemptuously to another member of his team, who was laying out two kinds of bread pudding.

By noon, the judges (most of them caterers and free-lance food writers) had arrived, as had a covey of additional reporters. One of the reporters gave a big vat of Edwardo's red beans a desultory probe. "This," she said blankly, "I saw in 'Brubaker.' " She hadn't seen Edwardo right behind her. He walked across the room and stewed in his own juices for a few minutes. "This she did *not* see in no 'Brubaker,' " he sputtered to a friend. "That's got *onion*, that's got *green pepper*, that's got *garlic*, that's got *oregano*, that's got *vinegar*. She did not see *those* beans in no damn 'Brubaker.' "

Finally, the judges announced their decision. To nobody's surprise, including Melzeta's, Edwardo won; he is the André Soltner of prison cooking, and also happens to be, by any standard, a very good Spanish cook. Then Mayor Koch arrived to award the trophy. In his brisk, let's-get-this-over-with manner, the Mayor went into Melzeta's room, gave a few things a poke and a nibble, and then walked down the hall to Edwardo's spread. First the Mayor tasted and then the Mayor ate. He tried the chicken, the rice, the steak, and the bread pudding. "Absolutely delicious," the Mayor said. "I haven't had anything as good at El Rincón, which is the best Spanish restaurant in the city. I'm going to write your mother." Then he looked right into a television camera. "Oh, boy!" he said to the members of the Department of Correction. "Once they see this, you're going to have a lot of people *wanting* to get into jail." Everyone from the department brightened visibly. "We serve better food in the New York City jails than in the finest restaurants of many cities I have visited," he went on. He turned around and spotted a salad tray. "And we serve salad," he said decisively. "It's better for people to have salads—take my word for it."

After a second helping of bread pudding, he remarked to Edwardo, "My father used to make carrot cake, and it drove my mother crazy, because his carrot cake was better than hers," and then he gave Edwardo a big trophy with a little silver chef on its summit. "After my sixth term, Eddie and I are going to open a restaurant together—Ed and Eddie's," he joked.

A woman from the Teamsters came over and whispered in the Mayor's ear. (All the cooks on Rikers Island belong to the Teamsters.) The Mayor nodded, and said, "What were you making, may I ask you, Eddie, at your previous job, at the pizzeria?"

"About three-fifty an hour," Edwardo replied.

"And what are you making now per hour with the Department of Correction, may I ask?"

Edwardo looked genuinely confused. "I—uh, well, I just don't know exactly," he said.

The woman from the Teamsters frowned. But the Mayor threw up his hands in mock exasperation and pointed at Edwardo. "*Artists!*" he said.

Memorials

LAST month was a busy one for two of Manhattan's oldest and smallest cemeteries. On the first Monday in May, the New York City Marble Cemetery held its annual meeting of vault owners. We called Robert C. Kennedy, the president of the cemetery's board of trustees, and asked if we might attend, and he said we'd be welcome. The sky was grim and threatened rain. If the weather permits, the vault owners, who are descendants of the vaults' original purchasers, meet in the cemetery itself, and they decided to risk it this time.

The New York City Marble Cemetery, which was opened in 1831, is a nonsectarian burial ground on Second Street between First and Second Avenues. Today, it is hemmed in on three sides by buildings. The south side, fenced with iron, faces the sidewalk. Across the street is Protection of the Holy Virgin Cathedral, of the Orthodox Church in America; behind the north wall, Mr. Kennedy had told us when we called him, is a lot in which the Hell's Angels used to park their motorcycles. "People ask what I do," he said. "I tell them I'm associated with a city landmark. They say, 'How wonderful! What is it?' I tell them 'A cemetery,' and they say, 'How awful!' "

When we arrived at East Second Street, a little early, the gate was open, and Mr. Kennedy was greeting two vault owners who were paying their first visit to the cemetery. Arthur Blasof, who has been the superintendent for fourteen years, was setting up a small semicircle of folding chairs, so his brother, who shyly declined to give his first name, showed us around. There are about two hundred and seventy-five vaults, containing coffins or urns. They are all underground and are arranged in seven rows. Most are marked by flat stones, but there are some elaborate monuments, and there's also a fancy aboveground "receiving vault," with an inscription on the lintel memorializing John Lloyd Stephens, who is buried underneath:

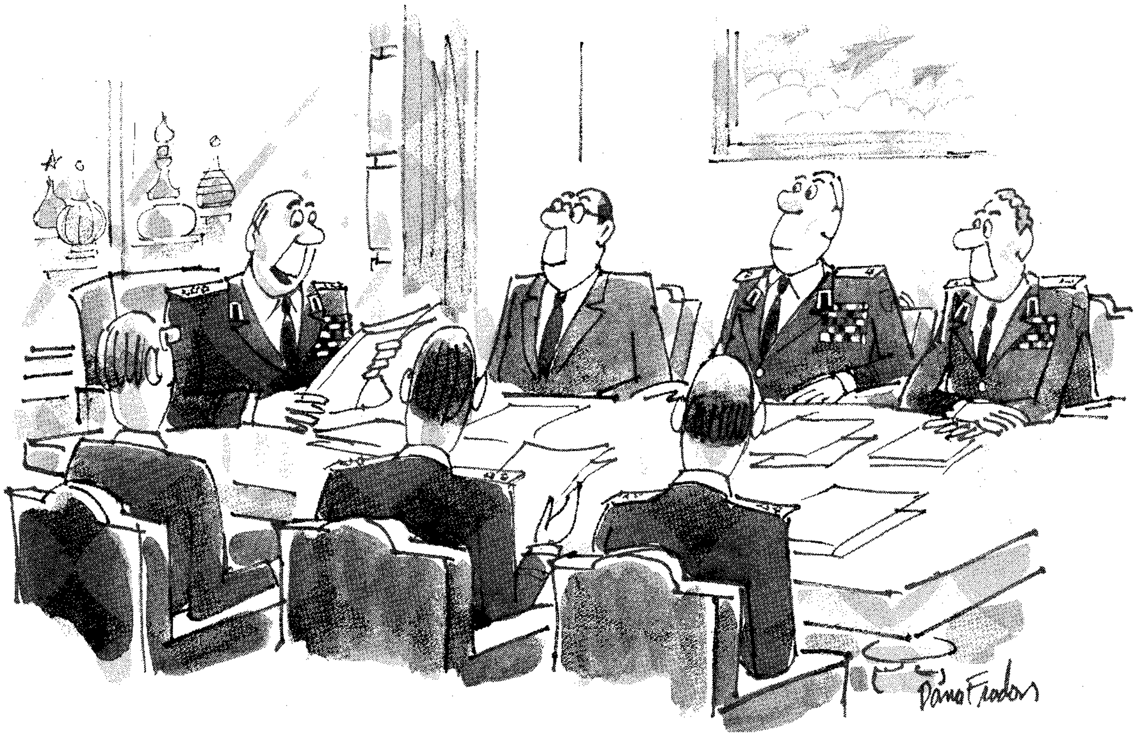
Traveler and Author
Pioneer in the Study of the Mayan
Civilization of Central America
Projector and Builder of
The Panama Railroad.

A Mayan glyph grins above the inscription.

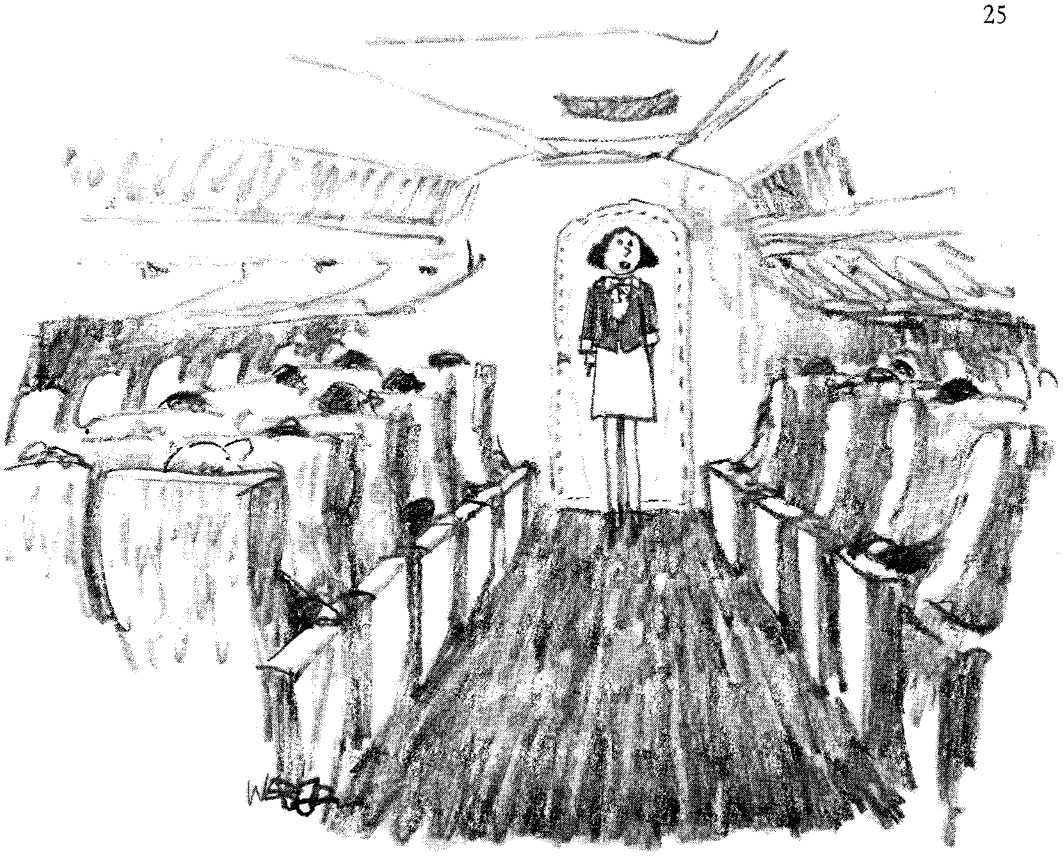
The cemetery's most famous tenant, President James Monroe, is no longer there. When Monroe died, in 1831, Samuel Gouverneur, his son-in-law, put him in the Gouverneur family vault, No. 147, but the Commonwealth of Virginia removed his body in 1858 for reburial in Richmond.

More owners arrived. "I have a new Japanese typewriter," Henry L. Pierson, the secretary, was saying. "It can do a Roman-numeral three." Henry M. Shrady III, a trustee, nodded. "I think communications for this cemetery are the only place where it's used," Mr. Pierson added.

When Mr. Kennedy wrote his annual letter to the vault owners, he named Robert Lenox (1759-1839) and his son James (1800-80),



"*It's a great treaty, but do we trust us?*"



“Is there a pilot in the house?”

the founder of the Lenox Library, who are interred in Vault No. 124, “our Men of the Year.” As it happened, a descendant of Robert Lenox, Mrs. Jennet Myers, was attending her first meeting. She poked among the monuments with a cane. “I used to know New York names, but I don’t know any of these,” she said. “Probably they were like the Lenoxes, and all died off.”

The meeting was called to order. A hundred and eighty owners had mailed in proxies. Eleven were present, and they discussed the minutes of the last meeting; the sidewalk, which needed repair; and the endowment, which didn’t. The superintendent reported that vandalism was down. “Just a matter of beer cans and wine bottles,” he said. Mrs. Myers said that everything was beautiful, and nominated the present trustees for reëlection. They were duly reëlected. With business concluded and rain coming on in earnest, the owners adjourned until next May.

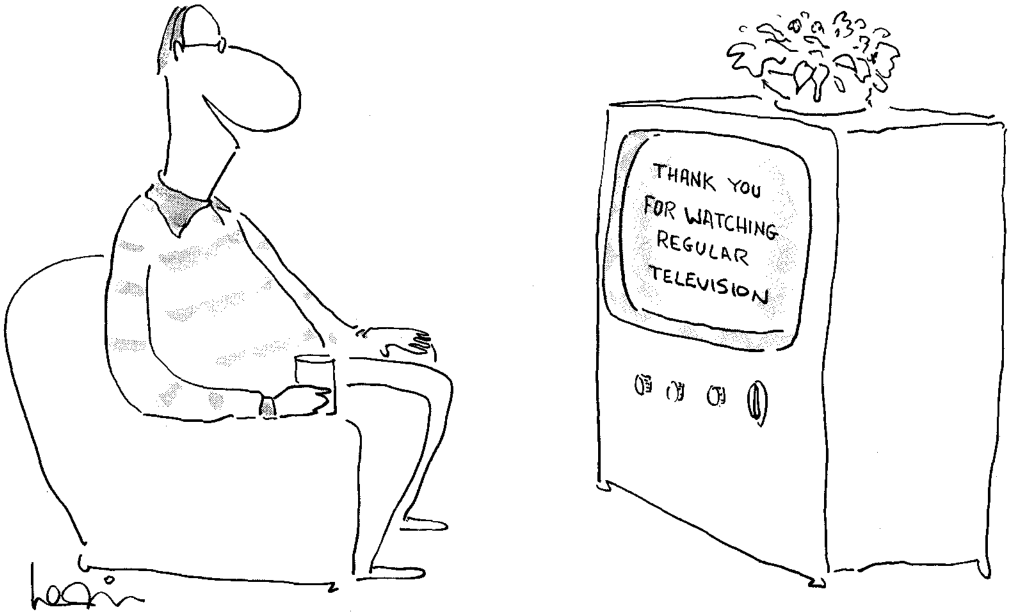
Then, on the Friday before Memorial Day, we joined members of the congregation of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, Shearith Israel, who had assembled in the First Shearith Israel Graveyard, on St. James Place, in Chinatown, to decorate the graves of Revolutionary War veterans. We had spoken earlier, at the synagogue, with Victor Tarry, the former executive secretary of the congregation. He said he remembered when the Second Avenue El ran in front of the cemetery. “Every time we had Memorial Day services and a train came along, we had to stop,” he said. “You couldn’t hear.”

The First Graveyard, we learned, is not actually the congregation’s first. By 1656, the Jewish community of New Amsterdam had been granted “a little hook of land” for a burial ground. Nobody knows where the little hook was. By 1683, the community had bought a tract near what would become Chatham Square, and the present site is a remnant of that purchase. Today, old tenements loom over the cemetery’s north and east sides; a tiny park, to the south, is littered with cardboard mattresses and empties. Stone steps leading up to the entry gate, on St. James Place, tilt awkwardly. Inside the gate are patches of ground where the grass has simply given up.

The pre-Memorial Day ceremony drew some fifty people, mostly members of the synagogue. Some had had trouble getting there. “I asked for St. James Place, but *nobody* knows where St. James Place is,” one man said. The ceremony opened with the executive director of the New York Landmarks Conservancy presenting the congregation with a grant of thirty-five hundred dollars from the Sacred Sites and Properties Fund to repair walls, paving, and ironwork. Then Rabbi Louis Gerstein, dressed in a black suit and a black homburg, took over. He said that the synagogue had been celebrating Memorial Day, or Decoration Day, since 1868, when the holiday began. The cemetery contains eighteen graves of Revolutionary War veterans, and he walked around to eleven of them, telling something about each occupant. The business of Solomon Myers Cohen had been “to sell spermaceti oil,” the Rabbi said, and he added, “He was a very important personality.” Myer Myers, “one of the great American silversmiths,” had proposed making bullets out of window leading. He had been president of the congregation. “By the way,” the Rabbi said, “it’s not easy to become president of a congregation, I can tell you.” Jacob Hart had lent “two thousand pounds” to Lafayette; he was “thoroughly steeped in Jewish tradition but also zealous in advancing the cause of freedom in America.” After each thumbnail portrait, a small American flag was planted in the ground next to the veteran’s grave. The last grave so honored belonged to Rabbi Gershom Mendes Seixas, a trustee of King’s (later Columbia) College and one of thirteen clergymen present at George Washington’s Inauguration. He was also “the first American-born rabbi to occupy the pulpit of Shearith Israel,” Rabbi Gerstein said. He added, “Happily, I can say that I am the second.”

You

IT has long been one of our fantasies to brave a rainy night and find ourself the entire audience at the première of a new play, so we felt a degree of


THANK YOU FOR WATCHING REGULAR TELEVISION

gratification when we received a flyer inviting us—"by appointment only"—to "You: The City," which was billed as "an intimate Manhattanwide play for an audience of one," written and directed by Fiona Templeton. We called to make an appointment, and were told to go to the eleventh floor of One Times Square promptly at six the next evening. "Oh," the person on the phone added, "be sure to wear comfortable shoes."

The next day, a drizzly Wednesday, we arrived for our appointment and found that the eleventh floor was full of offices undergoing reconstruction. At the end of a corridor we noticed a door marked with a piece of paper that said simply "You," and, just as we were about to knock, the door opened, and a pleasant-looking woman with a clipboard told us that we were expected, and offered us a seat and a "client questionnaire." "Are you now or have you ever been?" it asked. "Do you believe you can act? Are you to end there? Does it help?" For a few minutes, we sat on a long black leather couch feeling a little like one of those unwitting participants on "Candid Camera." Then the door of an adjoining office swung open, and a young woman who introduced herself as Ms. McKechnie asked us to take a seat inside. As we did, she plunged into a litany of observations that all had the word "you" in them. "If I could tell you that you are alive . . ." she said, pausing and looking at us, and then went on, "Between the meeting of you and life swings open a page with your finger tracing ordered letters. Nobody gave you the newspaper. Your finger gives you your wrist."

After a few minutes of this, Ms. McKechnie stood up and indicated that we were to take our raincoat and umbrella and follow her. She led the way back down to the street, continuing to tell us about ourself. "Did you see what I saw? Oh, you missed yourself, brother!" she exclaimed as we crossed Seventh Avenue. And then, in front of the pinball arcade at Seventh and Forty-second, she shook our hand and walked away. Out of a gaggle of passersby coming in the opposite direction another young woman stopped and took our arm. She escorted us up Broadway, continuing the cascade of "you"isms and punctuating them with wild shouts of words taken from the neon signs above. It was an odd sensation: here was a young woman screaming at us in the middle of Broadway, and no one even raised an eyebrow.

At Forty-sixth, we were ushered into a cheesy-looking rehearsal studio next to Howard Johnson's, and there a sexy woman stripped to a black negligee and performed a "you" monologue behind a scrim. As soon as she finished, a scruffy young man grabbed our arm and hustled us along Forty-sixth Street to the door of St. Luke's Church. There a sombre man with a goatee talked to us about the "spiritual" you. A gypsy cab was idling in front of the church, and the driver muttered something about "you." We hopped in and were driven to a playground at Forty-fifth between Ninth and Tenth. A young woman sidled up to us and cuddled close, as if we were on our first date. She left us in the drizzle, and we stood there waiting for something to happen. Finally, a fellow-loiterer took us to a nearby apartment, where we met another "client"—a woman, who seemed just as perplexed as we were. Someone else—we can't even remember now how it happened—led us back to the playground. By now, we were beginning to look at each person on the street as a potential performer. A tall black woman crossing the street looked as though she were headed our way, but then a man came from behind us and, with an enormous smile, conducted us to the Landmark Tavern, where we were informed that the performance was over, were offered a drink, and were introduced to Fiona Templeton, a Scottish poet and performance artist, who has been working in New York since 1978.

"The idea of performing in real places has always appealed to me," said Ms. Templeton, a small woman with wire-framed glasses and red hair that hangs below her waist. "But then I became interested in transforming the street itself. I mean, street theatre traditionally transforms the street into theatre, but I wanted to find the theatre that's already in the street. And, since I've always allowed the audience to determine a lot of my work, I wanted to take that to an extreme, where the audience would know how much they were influencing what was going on."

But why all the "you" business, we asked.

"Asking questions about 'you' is just a way of defining how the self is performed on by others," Ms. Templeton said. "Is the self defined by oneself or by the other? In poetry, that's a question that is usually meant to define whether the meaning of a poem exists in the text or in a reader's interpretation. It was important for me to put poetry into a situation where you didn't hear it in quotes. I wanted you, the audience, to be in the position of looking for something that you're not sure how to identify until finally it becomes clear that what you're looking for is yourself."

A MINUTE IN THE LIFE OF SAN MARINO

9:21:01 A.M. Startled into flight by the sudden whir of myriad automatic camera shutters, pigeon denizens of the historic Basilica in the heart of San Marino's capital—also called San Marino—are in no mood to muse on the fact that of the more than one hundred and thirty thousand 9:21 A.M.s since the republic's independence, in 1631, this is the first to be documented by a squad (left, center, right, extreme right, foreground) of world-class photographers.

9:21:09 A.M. Vito Fraccini, 24, San Marino's only working cowboy, shaves before the bathroom mirror of his widowed mother's tiny apartment, blinking not so much from camera flash as from astonishment that an award-winning photographer should burst out from behind the shower curtain inches away from his face. Vito hitchhikes daily to his half-acre ranch in the foothills four miles away; with money saved up from his after-hours job as San Marino's only nightclub bouncer, he hopes someday to buy a horse. But in his heart Vito Fraccini knows that woollens will always be a far more important industry.

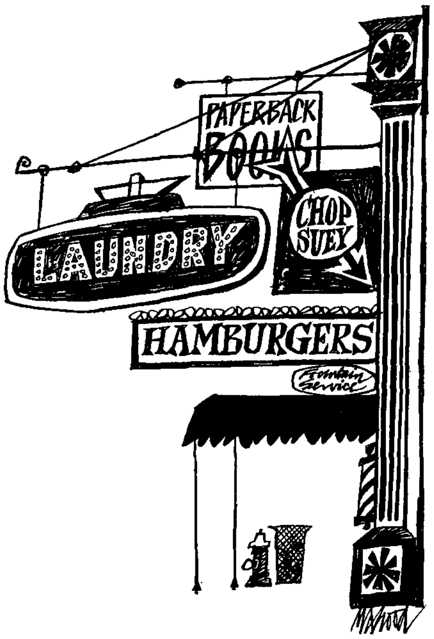
9:21:17 A.M. Like most paved roads in this twenty-four-square-mile patch of a republic, sewn onto the rumpled quilt of the Apennines and surrounded by Italy yet free to mint its own coins, National Route 83 between San Marino and the town of Serravalle is—by order of the governing sixty-member Grand Council—precisely as wide on the left as on the right side of its painted centerline. A lone Fiat rounding one of the highway's serpentine bends, on a journey to a destination or destinations unknown, gyrates to avoid the gaggle of photographers crouching directly in its path.

9:21:22 A.M. A vivid blur of flailing arms and knees all but obscures the five bewildered inmates of San Marino's only jail, as two intensely competitive and internationally lauded photographers vie for the prize of shooting the prisoners' post-breakfast cleanup routine, which in the centuries-old penal history of this, the oldest existing state in Europe, has never before been filmed.

9:21:28 A.M. Pursued by the camera in a high-speed foot chase that startles some onlookers and sends others flying, a canine freebooter bolts down a cobblestoned alleyway once lined with shops vending the hearty wines of San Marino's ancient vineyards, his jaws locked on a bag of freshly baked breakfast rolls freshly snatched from the hand of a famished French photographer.

9:21:34 A.M. Electrical cables brought in to power a photographer's auxiliary light bank coil unobtrusively across the floor of the engraving studio where many of San Marino's famed postage stamps are prepared for printing—but not quite unobtrusively enough to keep master engraver Giancarlo Settuci, 46, from entangling his feet, taking a pratfall, and ruining the plates for a new 2,500-lire commemorative stamp on the Discovery of Breathing that he had been carrying. San Marino's coffers are enriched by billions of lire annually through sale of postage stamps to philatelists around the world.

9:21:41 A.M. Blithely unaware that her portrait is about to be taken by the only living photographer ever bitten by a coelacanth one thousand feet beneath the surface of the Indian Ocean, fishmonger Rosa Salmi, 72, sets up her tray of nondescript flounder and shad in the Serravalle town square. Her jolly smile belies the fact that, unlike the raising of cereal crops, fishing in landlocked San Marino is an industry without past, present, or future.



9:21:44 A.M. Swooping and scattering in the winds swirling off Mt. Titano, at 2,400 feet the highest peak in all San Marino, hundreds of pudgy yellow butterflies magically metamorphose under more critical scrutiny into hundreds of empty film boxes.

9:21:49 A.M. The sudden sight of a strange man dangling head first outside their second-grade classroom window teaches those children still on their feet an impromptu lesson about the creative enterprise practiced daily by ace photographers in faraway lands. Cigarette, cigar, and pipe smoking are strictly prohibited throughout the school system of San Marino; teacher Sister Maria Teresa, 71 (under desk), only appears to be blowing a smoke ring.

9:21:52 A.M. Four elderly grandes dames of San Marino society huddle about their tiny marble-topped table in Serravalle's peeling old Trattoria Fiorentina, as they have for decades, for their morning coffee and pastries and gossip. Chances are that the talk around the table this morning will center on the size-14 lumberjack boots of the photographer standing upon it.

9:21:55 A.M. Pasquale Orlati, 57, San Marino's sole portrait photographer, using a hopelessly obsolete reflex camera mounted on a wobbly tripod with old-fashioned wooden legs, loads the wrong kind of film and sets far too long an exposure time for the group portrait he is about to take of the Astoni family—father Raffaelo, 42, mother Donna, 36, and their twin eight-year-old daughters Rosa (left) and Anna (right)—in a stilted pose before a phony-looking backdrop in his cramped and dingy so-called "studio."

9:22:01 A.M. Time waits for no man. Blithely unaware that the big hand has just clicked forever past the dot on the clock that marked this minute in the life of San Marino, Alberto DiMaestri, at six feet two this heavily Catholic mini-nation's tallest farmer, continues saying "Cheese" even while the camera he was saying it to—worth double what he can earn in a year—ricochets off a stone fence by way of a tree trunk in a muddy barnyard near Serravalle.

—Bruce McCall

THE FLIGHT OF ANDY BURNS

At the last minute there isn't enough spaghetti and Jack runs out to the corner store. He's a hero, everyone says, because it's raining and there's a big wind, but when he steps out into the rain it excites him—wild, energetic weather, not too cold. Rain sometimes induces a kind of euphoria in Jack, whose life has gone well lately, but he thinks that when people are sad rain probably makes it worse.

When he steps into the store his glasses fog up immediately, and he has to stop and rub them on the hem of his coat. The store is bright and warm; it's a tiny neighborhood grocery that was recently taken over by new people, who have added a deli in the back and a display of herbal teas. Jack would like to buy something festive for the company at his house tonight, and after a search he settles on homemade noodles, which the store has also started carrying lately. He buys two large packages of them. They do not lie flat, like the noodles in boxes; they take up a lot of room. On the way home he must hold his brown paper bag carefully, not to crush them. His raincoat billows out behind him because of the wind.

The visitors at his house are his cousin Susan and her husband, Ray. They are stopping here in New Haven tonight just to have dinner with Jack and his family, and then they'll drive on to Boston to visit their son, who is a graduate student at Tufts. They live in New Jersey, and they've been on the road for most of the afternoon. Later, there will be another guest—Ray's brother Mickey, whom Jack has never met. Mickey has recently moved to New Haven, and he will be coming over for dessert.

Walking home, with the rain blowing in his face, Jack laughs at himself a little, because he sees that he'd like to do something big for his cousin and her husband, and noodles are all he's come up with. Susan and Ray have had trouble. A year ago, their daughter died of cancer—their older child, who was twenty-four. Jack tries to imagine how such a loss would feel after a year. Maybe at times one would even forget it altogether, forget that it happened, and then suddenly be reminded—or maybe not. It might be an awareness behind everything else, like a constant flickering light that turns the people and furniture in a room into incomplete, interrupted shapes.

When Jack opens the door of his house he hears his older son (and middle child), Philip, playing his guitar and singing "Union Maid." Everyone is in the kitchen. Ray is standing in the kitchen doorway with his back to Jack, and Jack hears him join lustily in the chorus—"Oh, you can't scare me, I'm sticking to the union. . . ." Ray is scooping his arms up and forward enthusiastically, as if a large crowd of shy people behind him must be encouraged to join in the singing. Jack, who is actually behind him, does join in softly—he's shy about singing—while setting his parcel on a small table in the hall and taking off his wet raincoat. At the end of the song he carries the big bag of noodles into the kitchen. "We usually have to wait for dessert to hear Philip," he says.

"Tonight I'm the appetizer," says Philip.

"He's helping me distract the guests from the fact that they haven't been fed yet," says Franny, Jack's wife. There are crackers and cheese on the table, and all the adults except Ray are drinking wine. Ray is a beer drinker. Franny looks into the spaghetti pot on the stove and turns up the flame under it. She opens one of the packages of noodles.

"Make enough, Mom," says Martin. He is thirteen, their youngest child. Stephanie, the oldest, a high-school junior, is sitting next to Susan, talking earnestly to her in a low voice. Her head is bent and the reflection of the overhead light makes an oval on her smooth, short brown hair. Jack is glad she's there. He can't help wanting Susan and Ray to see what she's like, even while fearing that she may remind them of Becky, their daughter. But Stephanie isn't staying, it seems; she brushes past him and goes into the other room, then returns in her coat. She's going to a meeting, he remembers now. She's in a group that is helping to organize a peace rally on the New Haven Green. That must be what she was talking about to Susan.

"Where's the meeting?" Jack asks her.

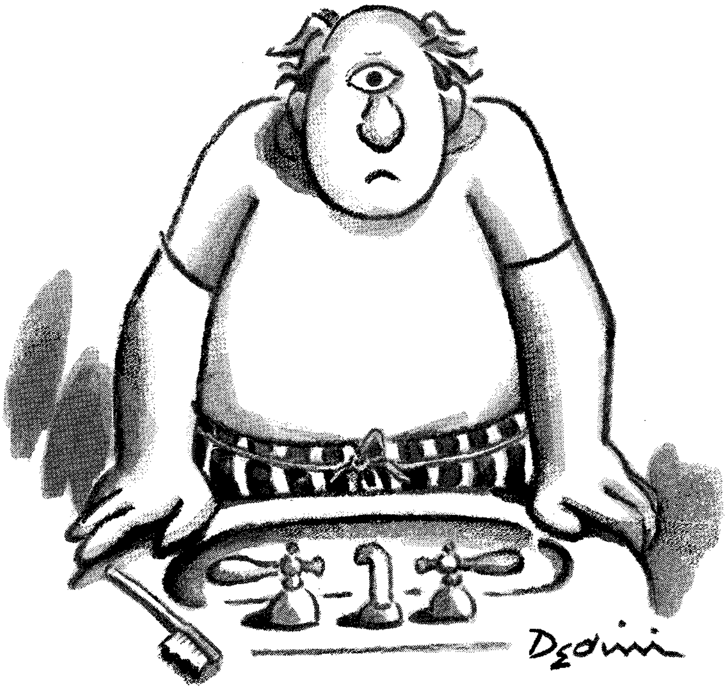
"Maple Street," says Stephanie. He still isn't used to her being old enough to drive. "I'll stop for all the red lights," she says. "*And* the stop signs. Bye, everyone."

Susan blows her a kiss. "She's so grown up," she says. She turns toward Philip. "You, too. How do you like high school? Isn't this your first year?"

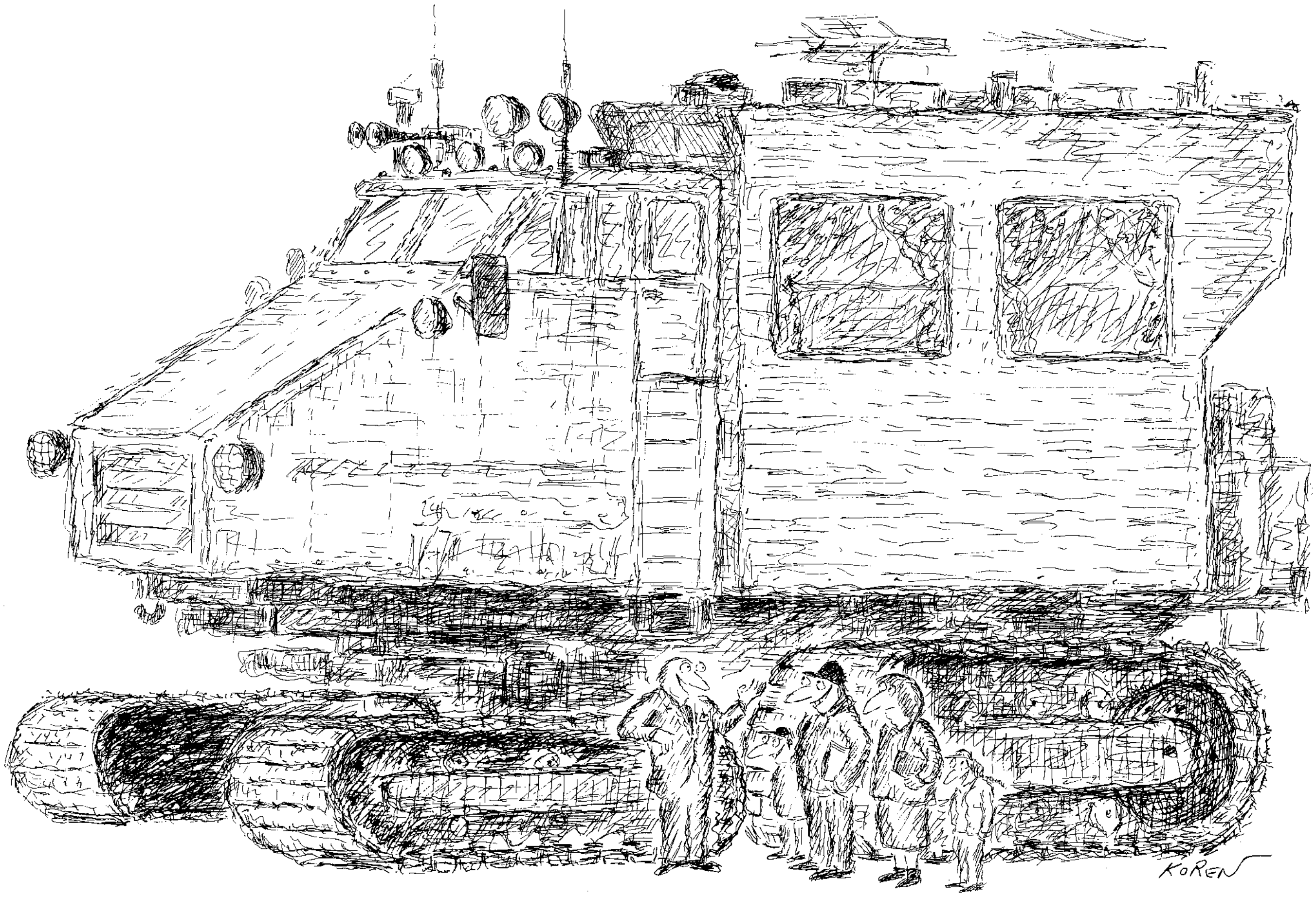
"It's O.K.," says Philip. "I don't like gym, though."

He glances at Franny, who says to him, "Believe it or not, I made some progress today, but is it O.K. to talk about it?"

"Sure," says Philip



Cyclops Notices He's Getting Bald and Decides That's the Last Straw



"Why not take her out for a spin? It'll blow your socks off!"

• •

calmly, to Jack's surprise. Philip explains that he is the shortest boy in gym class, and the others make fun of him. Once someone punched him. He'd like to get permission to drop gym and take it next year, when he'll surely be bigger, but apparently only parents can make that sort of thing happen.

"I've been leaving messages for that guidance counsellor, but we keep missing each other," says Franny. She is draining the noodles now. "Finally she had someone give me her home phone number. I'm going to call her after supper." She ladles chicken, broccoli, and mushrooms into the bowl.

Philip doesn't seem short to Jack. In the last couple of years, all his children have been transformed as if by magic from creatures he could pick up easily to people whose jackets he can borrow, at least for a one-minute dash outside—as mighty a change, it seems, as could possibly occur. Strangely, it has also made the children seem even more fragile than they used to be; when they were small, he remembers now, he would sometimes picture himself slipping them into his pocket.

He stands up to help Franny carry the food to the table, and Philip puts his guitar back into its case. When Jack sits down again, there is a brief silence. "So how are you doing?" he says, as they all pull their chairs closer.

"Well, it hasn't been my favorite year," says Susan.

Jack nods, and then nods again, a little differently, to encourage her to help herself from the bowl of noodles and chicken and vegetables.

"But it wasn't as bad as the year before that," she goes on. "That was the worst time, when the news was always bad."

Susan passes the bowl on to Ray. "This looks great," he says. "Becky used to play the guitar," he says to Philip. "I remember her playing Joan Baez songs. Do you know those?"

"Some," says Philip. Now he is shier.

"When I was your age I was shorter than you," Ray says.

Philip smiles. Ray, who is the head of a real-estate firm in New Brunswick, is a middle-sized man now, but he seems larger. He has broad shoulders and powerful arms, and a loud, cheerful voice. Now he gestures with his napkin as he raises it to his lips. "They punched you?"

"Sort of," says Philip.

"Big guys?"

"Pretty big."

"And they pass remarks?"

"Sometimes."

Ray turns to Franny. "You're doing the right thing not to leave it alone," he says.

"MY brother needs a ride," says Ray. They have finished eating, and the children have gone upstairs. Ray has been leaning back in his chair, listening while Franny and Susan talk. Susan hasn't said much except to ask Franny questions about the chil-

THE CAPE RACER

At the auction of the stuff
in the Staples' barn—ox shoes;
the kit for shoeing oxen;
a cider press; an anvil;
a hand-turned clothes washer; the box
of cobbler's lasts and hammers,
nails and rubber heels; a berry rake;
a double-boiler lunch pail
in which the lumberjack's boiled coffee
in the lower pan keeps from freezing
his sandwich in the pan above; a pitchfork;
another pitchfork; a lot of three
hay rakes; and a harness—resisting
all these as the bidders
responded to the auctioneer's
palaver, he an adept
insinuator of desire
in the hard-worked men who stood
under a light rain laughing
at his inevitable joke about
the thundercrock with the cracked
lid somebody bid two bucks for,
I nodded when he lifted
and held before us
a Cape racer,

I who didn't need a thundercrock,
harness, hay rakes, lumberman's
lunch pail of cobbler's lasts,
why did I want a Cape racer?
We're never here in winter
when the hill behind the farm is sheeted
with levelled snow and the tall grass
a mere stubble casting long shadows
on the unmarked tilt of crusted meadow,
but I could not resist the lovely shape
of the racer Hiram Gray devised and made here
and named for this Cape in '79
of the last century, seeing
its length the height of a man
just one inch under six feet long,
its breadth a mere nine inches
—just wide enough to lie on—
the frame, on which the runners,
flat iron bands screwed onto bent ash rods,
supports a boy four inches
from the whistling ground,
its twenty-two hand-whittled spars spaced
two inches and a half apart, no thicker
than your little finger, each one fitted
into holes drilled in the sleigh frame's upper bars,
and the racer held together without nails,
rivets, screws, or glue, the thing made taut
by tension of the twisted cords between
the right-hand frame and the left, cords
doubled and turned, turned with a sliver
of wood wedged
between pairs of the spars to hold it fast,
the sleigh so light one hand can hold it
in the air while bids are asked for,
so sleek it seems prepared for flight
over the clouds as well as the frozen hills

—the farmers and the lobstermen,
the lumbermen and berry-rakers
had no need for sleighs, so my initial
nod assenting to the auctioneer's
"Dollarbill, somebody bid me a dollarbill . . ."
has made me owner and proprietor
of a Cape racer I've never raced nor likely
ever shall speed down
the berry field and meadow with the grass tufts slithering
beneath my ears and the cut snow
whipping and stinging
numbed cheeks and reddened knuckles.
It's pleasure enough to see it lean
against the wall all summer,
as ready as ever it was to test
its lightness, strength, and taut design
on the crust of the bright snow or down
the white slopes of the mind.

—Daniel Hoffman

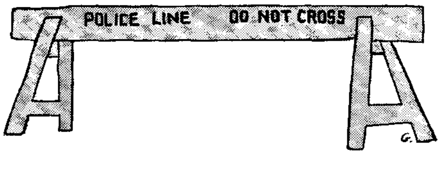
* * *

dren. "I'll go get Mickey," Ray says, getting up. He goes out to the hall to find his raincoat, and when he comes back he's holding an umbrella. "Can I borrow this?" he says. "But I don't know what good it'll do. The wind will just turn it inside out."

There's a sudden push of wind as he goes out and then slams the door behind him. Franny excuses herself to go and call the guidance counsellor. Jack finds himself alone in the kitchen with Susan. He sets about clearing the table, not very fast. He shouldn't rush around noisily, he feels, but if he sat and looked at Susan that wouldn't be good, either. He would like to be useful to her.

"Are you teaching this year?" he says as he begins to gather up the silverware.

Susan was a dancer when she was younger; more recently she has taught in a ballet school. She's gained weight, but she's still shapely and graceful. She's a little taller than her husband. Her clothes look soft to him tonight—gray slacks, a loose pink sweater with a gray scarf that's arranged near her face.



Susan tells him that lately she has been selling real estate in Ray's firm. Before that, she had been home too much. "Thinking," she says. "The school I taught in just wasn't open for many hours altogether. Now I can sit in the office, if I need to, and see people."

"Are you selling houses or business properties?" Jack looks over his shoulder at her. She looks dignified—credible. Customers would trust her, he decides.

"Some of each," she says. "And I've been renovating an old house with another woman—that's the best part."

"That's wonderful."

"Yes. We've tiled a bathroom and hung wallpaper and painted. I never did those things before."

"I think that's great," he says.

"When we began, I kept *assuming* things would go wrong," Susan goes on. "When I painted, I expected the paint to just peel away from the wall in little strips." She pauses. Jack has found a refrigerator dish and is spooning the leftover noodles into it. "I used to be an optimist," Susan says.

"I guess you'd have to be, to dance." He is thinking of turns and leaps, of hurling oneself into the air.

But before Susan can answer, Franny comes into the room, looking pleased. "Wait till you hear about this guidance counsellor!" she says. "I explained about the gym class. I said maybe we were making too much of it, but she just said, 'Well, I'll yank him out!' Just like that—'I'll *yank* him out!' " She smiles at them both. "She sounded like Ethel Merman."

Philip is behind her. "Rescued!" he says, smiling at Susan.

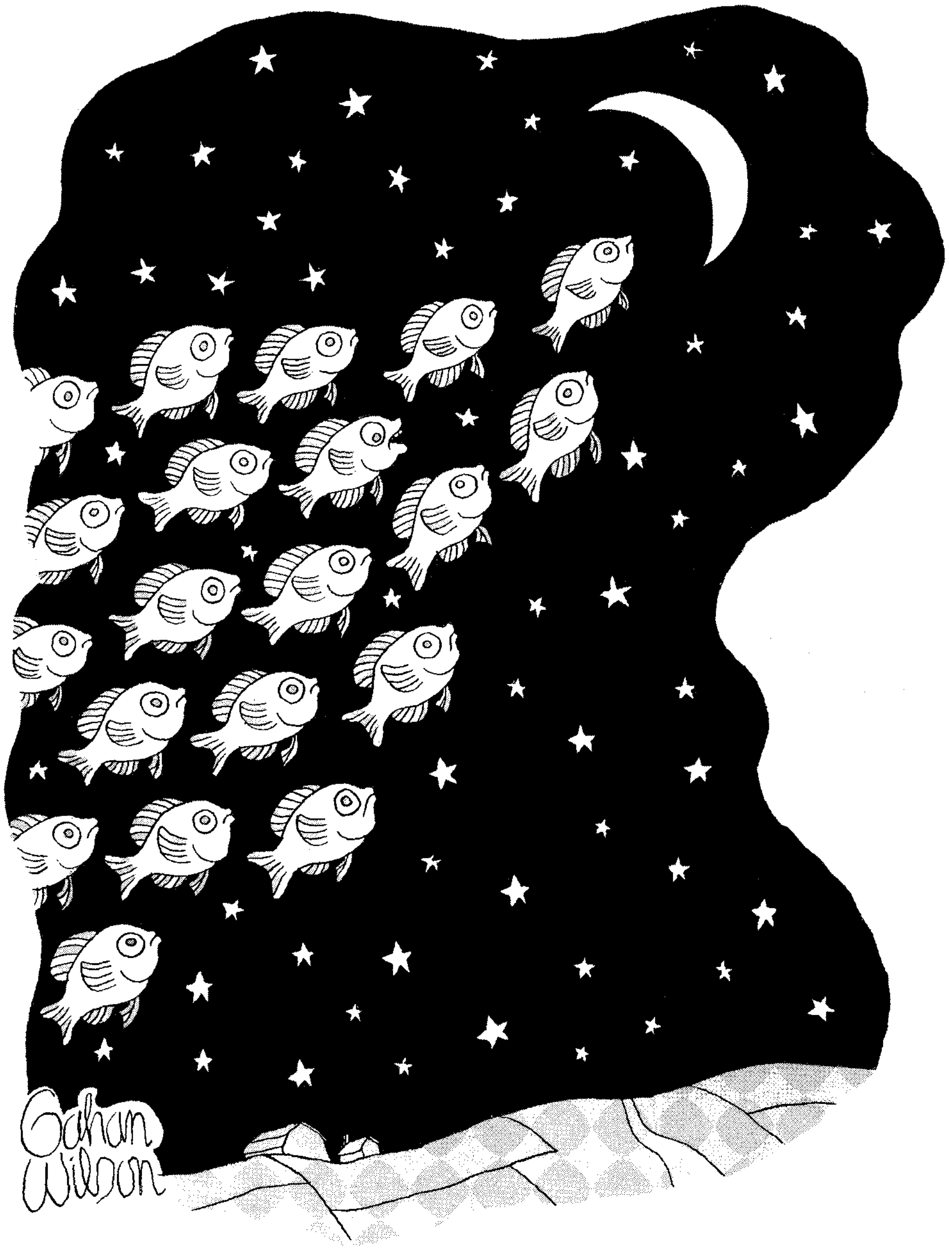
When Ray and Mickey arrive a few minutes later—they come in laughing, pummelled by the wind and rain—they, too, must hear about the guidance counsellor. Mickey turns out to be younger than Ray: slighter, with an elfin look. He doesn't seem to mind hearing about Philip and the gym class, even though he's just barely come through the door. " 'I'll yank him out!' " Philip repeats with satisfaction.

"I need someone like that in *my* life," Mickey says. He gives Jack his damp raincoat, and they all sit down at the table. There are cookies and ice cream for dessert, and when everyone has been served Franny sets about making coffee. "I have decaffeinated, too," she says, taking the mugs out of the cupboard.

"I'd better have the real stuff," Ray says. "We still have a long drive."

"All right if I fall asleep in the car?" Susan says to him.

"Sure," he says. "You sleep, I'll drive."



"I knew he was lost the moment we left the water."

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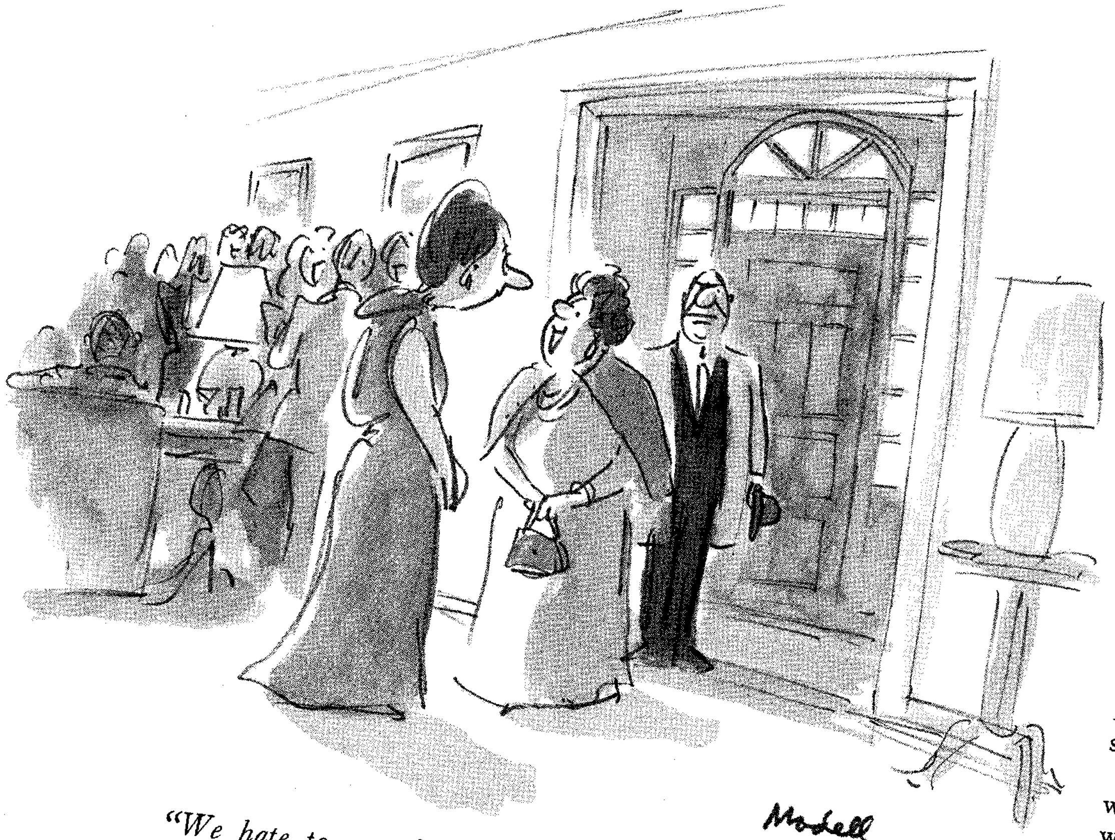
When the coffee is ready, Jack jumps up to carry the full mugs to the table. They are dark-blue mugs, almost black, made by a potter they once knew. "With caffeine," he says to Ray—he is being careful to keep track. Then he gives Mickey his. But when he is setting Susan's mug down on the table next to her, either his hand shakes or she moves, for some reason, and jerks her arm against the mug—Jack thinks later that he might have seen her arm move—and the mug tips over, splashing hot coffee on Susan's thighs, and then rolls to the edge of the table and falls to the floor. Susan jumps up and cries out, and then she is sobbing—a startling, terrible sound—while Jack grabs a dish towel and swipes at her legs, but Franny calls sharply, "Take off your pants!" She pushes Susan toward the hall and into the bathroom, while Susan, still crying, starts to fumble with her belt buckle. By the time Franny gets her into the bathroom Susan has pulled her pants down. Franny splashes cold water on Susan's thighs, Jack sees from the hall—he is following them—and then he thinks to back away. "Are you all



"We hate to run, but Herbert likes to get home in time to slam the phone down on a few telemarketing calls."

right?" he keeps calling. "Are you all right?"

"She'll be all right," says Ray. He has picked up the mug—the handle has broken off—and he and Philip are sopping up coffee with paper towels.

"Put wet towels on her legs," Mickey calls.

"I am," Franny says. She keeps the water running in the basin, keeping the towels cold, and after a while Susan calls out, "I'm O.K. It's all right. But my pants are soaked."

Ray goes out to the car and brings in their suitcase. "It's still raining," he says. "Still so windy, too."

When Susan comes out of the bathroom, wearing a different pair of pants—blue, this time—Jack puts his arms around her. "I am *so* sorry," he says. She hugs him back, hard. He has always liked Susan, but he cannot remember hugging her before, even when they visited her and Ray last year, just after Becky died. They kissed then, he seems to recollect, but they didn't hug.

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"It's all right," says Susan. "It only hurts a little. And I liked being looked after." Then she turns to Ray. "I really am fine—but it's late. We have to go."

It *is* late, everyone suddenly notices. Ray takes a last mouthful of coffee—Susan never did get her decaffeinated, Franny points out—and he and Mickey stand up together and each smiles at the other. Franny has been sponging the gray slacks; now she puts them into a plastic bag for Susan, while Jack goes for the visitors' coats.

"We'll drop you off," Ray says to Mickey. "It's right on the way, practically." They all move into the front hall, talking, and when Ray opens the door they can still hear the wind.

Jack is holding Susan's coat for her. "Now, don't blow away!" he says.

"Good point," says Mickey, and he suddenly beams at Jack as if he'd said something particularly sharp. "When I was in fifth grade—in Mrs. Corelli's room— Remember her, Ray?"

"Sure," says Ray.

"You wouldn't fool around with Mrs. Corelli," says Mickey. "Anyway, one day it was windy and rainy, just like this, and a boy named Andy Burns came to school and announced to the whole class that on his way the wind picked him up and blew him kitty-corner across the street and then set him down again, right on his route."

"Did that really *happen?*" says Martin.

Jack pictures a ten-year-old floating across a busy intersection—he pictures a crossing near his house, where the store is, actually.

"The thing is, he just wasn't the sort of boy who'd make it up," says Mickey. "He was shy and very serious. He didn't usually talk that way at *all*—you know, stand up and say something to the whole class."

"Unlike you, I'm sure," says Susan, smiling, though her eyes are still red from crying. "I'm sure you talked all the time, and made things up, too."

"Oh, I was awful," says Mickey.

"Did he use the word 'kitty-corner'?" Franny asks.

"Yes," says Mickey. "Somehow I've always thought he wouldn't make that part up."

He turns back as they head for the door. "But don't worry—I'll hold on to Susan and Ray." He puts one hand lightly on each of them, on their shoulders, while everyone says goodbye, and as they all three start down the porch steps, still with Mickey's hands on the others' shoulders, Jack lets himself imagine that his cousin and her husband will indeed be lifted off their feet by the wind. Held fast by Mickey, they will stream out behind him in the air like beginning swimmers learning the flutter kick. The wind won't hurt them or carry them away—it will just give them a ride.

—Alice Mattison

ANNALS OF WAR

AN AMERICAN SOLDIER IN VIETNAM

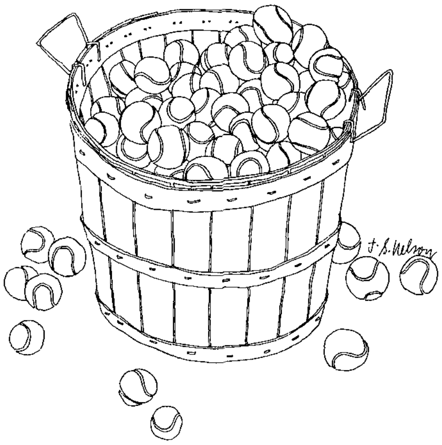
I—THE ROOSTER AND THE TIGER

WHEN Lieutenant Colonel John Paul Vann, in starched cotton khakis and a peaked green cap, strode through the swinging doors of Colonel Daniel Boone Porter's office in Saigon, shortly before noon on March 23, 1962, he struck Porter as a man no one could keep down. Porter soon had the feeling that if the commanding general were to tell this junior lieutenant colonel he was surrendering direction of the war to him John Vann would say, "Fine, General," and take charge.

The commanding general in Vietnam then was Paul Harkins, who had made his reputation as the principal staff aide to George Patton in the Second World War. In December, 1961, President Kennedy had committed the arms of the United States to the task of suppressing a Communist-led rebellion and preserving South Vietnam as a separate state governed by an American-sponsored regime in Saigon. The following month, he had decided to create the United States Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV), in Saigon, and appoint Harkins to head it. During 1962, the President was to nearly quadruple the number of American military men in South Vietnam, from thirty-two hundred to eleven thousand three hundred. Interviewing and assigning the newcomers was taking up far more of Colonel Porter's time than he wanted to spend on it. His office, which was high-ceilinged, and opened onto a veranda, was in an old French cavalry compound hidden behind trees along a wide boulevard, noisy with traffic, that connected downtown Saigon with its Chinese suburb of Cholon. The compound was the headquarters of III Corps of the Saigon government's army, formally known as the Army of the Republic of Vietnam, or ARVN. ("Arvin," as the American officers called it, was supplemented on the provincial, district, and village levels by two territorial forces: the Civil Guard and the Self-Defense Corps militia.) Porter was the adviser to the Vietnamese brigadier general in command of the corps, and the other officers in his detachment worked with the corps's staff section.

Porter noticed that, despite the heat, Vann had managed to keep his khakis unrumpled, and that he gave a brisker salute than most officers would have before accepting Porter's invitation to sit down. There was little about him that was handsome. At first glance, he appeared runty: he stood five feet nine inches and weighed a hundred and fifty pounds, and he reminded Porter, whose father had owned a feed and farm-merchandise store in Texas, of a banty rooster. His straight-ribbed nose was too large for his narrow face. The nostrils flared over a wide and equally straight mouth. These features were accentuated by a high forehead and by sandy hair worn close-cropped in the fashion of American military men of the nineteen-fifties and sixties. His gray-blue eyes, however, caught one's attention and gave an indication of his character: they were the eyes of a falcon, narrow and deep-set under bushy brows. His body was lithe, all muscle and bone, and wonderfully quick. He had been a gymnast and a track star in school and in his early Army years. He prized his body—did not smoke, and rarely drank—and kept fit with basketball and volleyball and tennis. At thirty-seven, he could still perform a backflip.

Vann responded without hesitation to Porter's questions about his career experience. When he volunteered to go to Vietnam, he had requested one of the most sought-after positions—that of chief adviser to an ARVN infantry division. There were nine divisions in the ARVN—varying in strength from about eighty-five hundred to ten thousand men—and three of them were in Porter's corps region. (A corps is a military organization composed of two or more divisions.) Vann had been a lieutenant colonel only ten months, and by date of rank there were officers who stood ahead of him, but that impediment could be waived at Porter's discretion. Vann was cocky about his ability to handle the job, and his cockiness did not put Porter off. He was looking for a bold and unconventional man to serve as senior adviser to the most important division in III Corps—the 7th Infantry Division, in the northern Mekong River Delta.



Porter had read Vann's record of schooling and previous assignments carefully. He had noticed that Vann had commanded a Ranger company in behind-the-lines operations during the Korean War and had also displayed a capacity for management in a number of staff assignments. He was a specialist in logistics—an unusual qualification for an infantry officer who had proved his ability to lead in combat—and had a master's degree in business administration from Syracuse University. Porter wanted an officer who was both an organizer and a fighter, because both talents were required to put together a coördinated war effort in the northern part of the Mekong Delta. The more he and Vann talked, the more Porter thought that Vann might do. Although Porter had been in South Vietnam less than three months himself, he had travelled widely there and had gone out on a number of operations against the Communist-led guerrillas. Everything he saw had convinced him that if the Vietnamese on the Saigon side were to prevail they needed Americans who would show them how to fight their war and also find a way to goad them into fighting it.

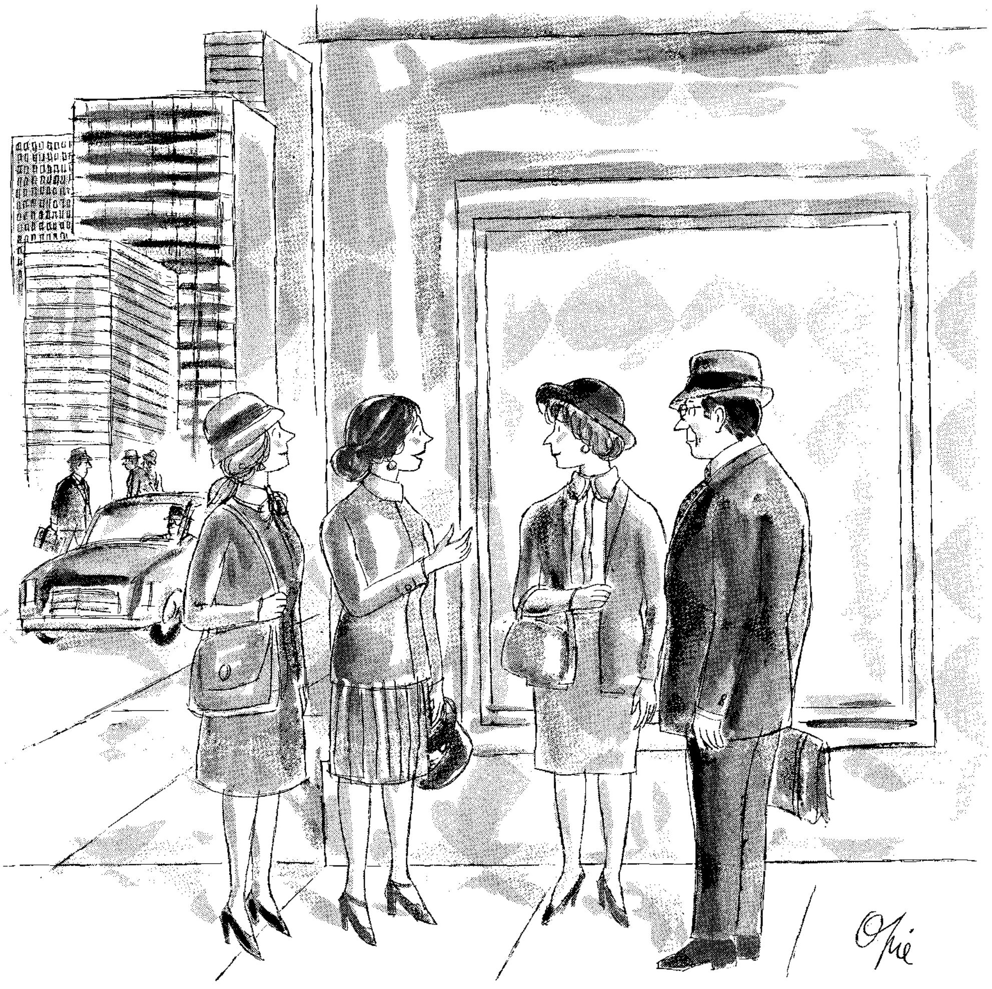
Porter told Vann that he could consider himself the prospective senior adviser for the 7th Division, but that a firm decision would be reserved for a while. In the meantime, Vann would be on probation, undergoing seasoning and doing odd jobs. After lunch, Porter gave Vann his first odd job. He explained that some idiot who preceded them—who had mentally never left a Pentagon office—had set up a computerized supply system for the ARVN divisions and the territorial forces in the corps. The Vietnamese lieutenant colonel who was the corps G-4 (the designation for the assistant chief of staff for logistics) and his officers had no idea of how to send a supply request to a computer. Neither did the American lieutenant colonel who was the current G-4 adviser. Instead of spare parts and other equipment they needed, they had received a large stack of unintelligible paperwork, which Porter now handed to Vann. Could Vann try to make some sense out of it? He took Vann down to the G-4 advisory section, introduced him to the American officers working there, and arranged for him to have a desk.

Toward the end of the afternoon, Vann returned to Porter's office with a memorandum several pages long which he had typed. It translated the computerese into layman's language, described the concept of the system simply, and laid out a practical way for the Vietnamese G-4 officers and their American advisers to use the system to order the spare parts and other matériel required. Porter was taken aback. He had only a passing knowledge of computerized systems, but he was certain that he had given Vann enough work to keep an ordinary officer with an expertise in logistics occupied for two days. Although Porter did not tell Vann that afternoon, he decided then and there that the rooster was going to the 7th Division.

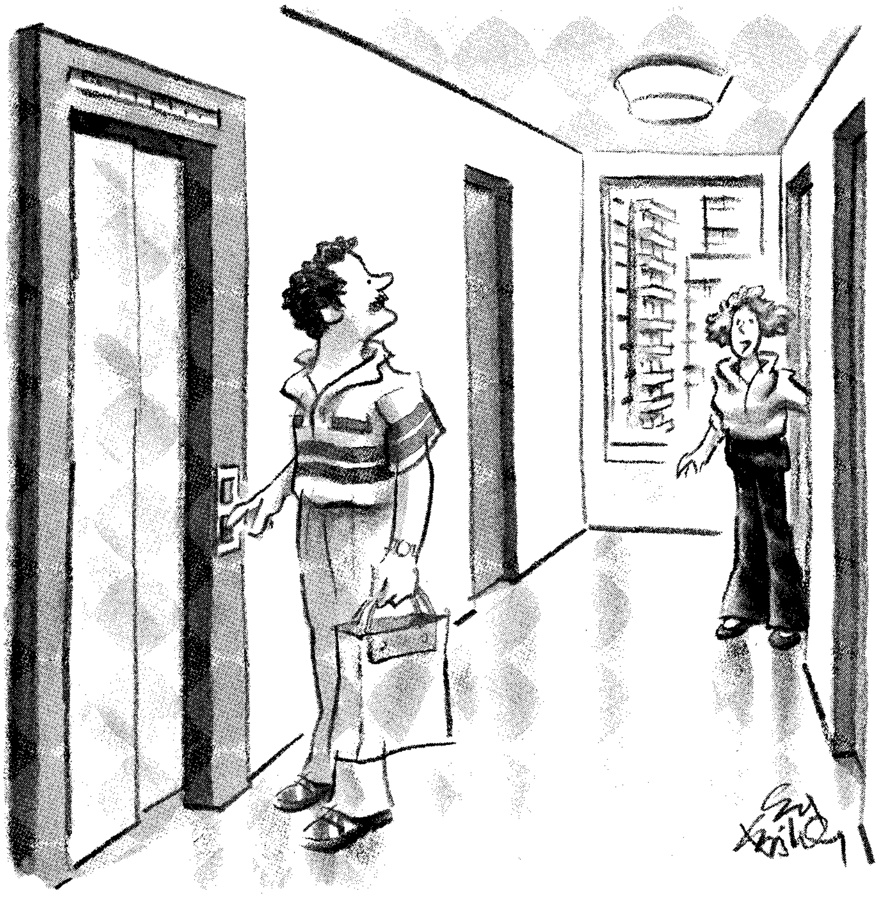
For the next two months, Porter took advantage of Vann's diverse talents and prepared him for his job. Of the three ARVN corps regions, the III Corps was the largest, and most of the fighting was taking place within it. The III Corps region extended from the tip of the Ca Mau Peninsula, at the bottom of the Mekong Delta, up through a belt of provinces that ringed Saigon on the north. To acquaint Vann with as much of this war as he could, Porter sent him on helicopter assault missions with the division stationed in the rubber-plantation country north of the capital, where the teak and mahogany rain forests edged down from the foothills of the Central Highlands. He let Vann range south through the expanse of ricelands nourished by the Mekong, the great river of Indo-China. Vann marched on operations with the two divisions there, and visited the main province towns and also the rural district centers, where the district chiefs lived with their families and had their offices in little compounds fortified with bunkers and barbed wire. To familiarize Vann with the weaknesses of the ARVN staff system, Porter also put him to work in the corps G-3 (Operations) and G-2 (Intelligence) sections.

On the morning of May 21, 1962, Vann shook hands with Porter and climbed into an open jeep. He drove out of the old French cavalry camp and then maneuvered, in his impatient way, through Saigon's vehicular extravaganza of taxis, scooters, trucks, and buses coming from and heading for the countryside, and down a two-lane tarmac road that was the main route into the Delta. He was on his way to the 7th Infantry Division headquarters, at My Tho, thirty-five miles to the south. Porter had given him the best assignment in the country. He was putting Vann in command of the American effort in the cockpit of the war.

John Vann was to remain in Vietnam, off and on, for the next ten years, and in the course of those years he would come to play a telling role—as both critic and shaper of events—in his country's longest war. Vann would prove to be a natural leader of men in war. He was a child of the American South in the Great Depression, a redneck born and raised in a poor-white working-class district of Norfolk, Virginia. He never tanned, his friends liked to say. Whenever he exposed himself to the sun by marching with



"Yes, just in town for the day, shopping around for a lawyer."



"Pick up the cleaning, a chocolate mousse, and something with Cary Grant."

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the South Vietnamese infantrymen on operations, as he did constantly, his ruddy neck and arms simply got redder. Unusual physical stamina and an equally unusual assertiveness more than compensated for Vann's lack of height. His constitution was extraordinary, permitting him to turn each day into an ordinary man's two days. In normal times, he required only four hours of sleep, and he could function effectively for extended periods with only two. He could—and routinely did—put in two eight-hour working days in every twenty-four and still have half a working day in which to relax and amuse himself. His assertiveness showed in a harsh, nasal voice and a brisk, clipped way of enunciating his words.

Vann always knew what he wanted to do and how he wanted to do it. He had a genius for solving the day-to-day problems that arise in the course of moving forward any complicated enterprise. The genius lay in his pragmatic cast of mind and in his instinct for assessing the particular talents and motivations of other men and turning those talents and motivations to his advantage. Detail fascinated him. He prized facts; he absorbed great quantities of them with ease and was always searching out more, confident that once he had discovered the facts of a problem he could correctly analyze it and then apply the proper solution. His character and the education that the Army had given him at service schools and civilian universities had combined to produce a man who could be possessed by the task that faced him and at the same time sufficiently detached to discern its root elements. He manifested the faith and the optimism of post-Second World War America—the faith that any challenge could be overcome by will and by the disciplined application of intellect, technology, money, and, when necessary, armed force.

John Vann had no physical fear. In the course of the decade, he was to acquire a reputation for invulnerability. Time and again, he took risks that killed other men, and he always survived. The odds, he said, did not apply to him. He would display this exceptional willingness to take risks during his first year in Vietnam—from March, 1962, to April, 1963—and in later years as well. That first year, while the ambassador and General Harkins were telling the Kennedy Administration that everything was going well, Vann could see that the war was being lost. He believed then and never ceased to believe that the war was winnable if fought with sound tactics and strategy. When General Harkins and his staff in Saigon did not listen to Vann, and his reports aroused their displeasure, he leaked his meticulously documented assessments to the American correspondents in the country. (I was one of them.) His outspokenness made him a hero to the journalists of the period, and profoundly affected their views and their reporting of the war. For some of them, he would become the symbol of all the contradictions underlying the American venture in Southeast Asia.

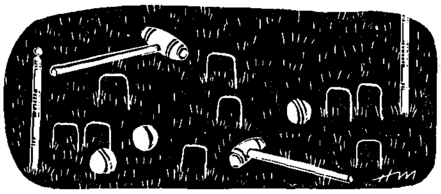
Despite his maverick behavior, Vann gradually rose in the system as those in power in Saigon and Washington came to realize that his dissent from tactics or strategy was intended to further the war effort, not to hinder it. The influence he gradually acquired over the years within the United States civil-military bureaucracy and the Saigon government structure made him in the end the most important American in the country after the ambassador and the commanding general. Indeed, his accumulated expertise and his aptitude for fighting this war finally made him the one irreplaceable American in Vietnam.

IN 1962, the 7th Division's zone of responsibility covered most of the northern half of the Mekong Delta, where the course of the war was going to be decided. (The Saigon government had already forfeited most of the southern half to the guerrillas.) Approximately thirty-eight thousand of Saigon's troops faced an estimated fifteen thousand guerrillas there. The government that the United States was depending on to hold South Vietnam was unlikely to survive if it lost a region so rich in manpower and resources on the edge of its capital.

The challenge and the responsibility did not intimidate Vann. Rather, he welcomed them, with an exhilaration that held no little arrogance. In his American mental universe of 1962, there were no unknowables and no unattainables; what he did not know, he could discover. He had no experience with guerrilla warfare beyond the unconventional operations of his Ranger company in Korea, but he had spent the past nineteen years learning how to make war. A counter-guerrilla war was simply another form of warfare, and he would learn how to wage it successfully. Vann also knew nothing of the Vietnamese or their culture or history, but he was convinced from his experiences as a junior officer in Korea and Japan that Asians were not inscrutable. Vann was sure that he would be able to grasp what motivated the Vietnamese officers with whom he would be working, and persuade them to do what was in their best interests and in the best interests of the United States. To him the fact that the French had been defeated in Indo-China was irrelevant. Unlike the French, Americans were not colonialists, he maintained, and, in any case, the French were a decadent people whose time had passed. Americans were different.

John Vann had no moral qualms about killing Vietnamese Communists and those who fought for them, nor was he troubled by the fact that Vietnamese who sided with the United States would be killed in order to achieve American aims in Vietnam. He had been trained to kill Germans and Japanese in the Second World War, although the war had ended before he could see combat. During the Korean War, he had killed Koreans on the Communist side and, with a clear conscience, had helped send Koreans who were fighting on his side to their deaths. He assumed that he and his fellow-Americans had a right to take life and to spend it—as long as they did so with discretion.

Vann felt an urgency to reverse the trend of the war in the northern Delta. As matters stood in May, 1962, the Vietcong had the strategic and tactical initiative, deciding when and where to fight, and on what terms. The Saigon side was on the defensive, reacting to guerrilla moves instead of carrying the war to the enemy. The main road ran south from Saigon to My Tho and then split into two roads, running west and south into the lower Delta; it could be travelled in a single jeep in the daytime but required a pair at night. In large areas of the five provinces in the 7th Division zone, the guerrillas had rendered the secondary roads impassable to vehicles by organizing peasants to dig ditches across them and to dismantle bridges. They had not yet dug up the roadbeds entirely, scattering the dirt across the paddy fields, as they had through much of the lower Delta, but they would get around to it if they were not stopped. On any secondary roads that were usable, an escort of at least a reinforced platoon was considered a necessity by the Saigon officers, and even then there was no guarantee that the vehicles would escape ambush. While not all the peasantry in the upper Delta sympathized with the guerrillas, the majority either



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I am watched by the eyes in a peacock's tail.
All day I hear the voices hissing, Mad girl,
you have no roof, no door, no bed.
The world flies by in its fragments: valleys
and hilltops, doors, doors.

The evening grasses in which the footsteps disappear—
I lean down into their wavering,
the story of each blade
sequestered. The ants with crumbs on their backs,
the black dismembered bees.
Where is the girl who dreamed of being held?
Where is the girl who felt as she walked into a stand

of narrow trees made white by frost (or did she dream it?)—
the grass made steely white by frost, the air so thick
with fog she couldn't see her hands—
that she would come, if she just kept on walking long enough,
to arms that would hold her, take her in?
I remember and do not remember being her.

The towns clog the valleys like something made by fear.
Fear of loneliness, of dream.
They huddle at the bottom of the hills,
offering up to the hollowed hours a brief and fragile
calmness: glasses of clear water, windowsills of herbs.
And touch, which is sometimes not a lie.
And voices, voices
like nets cast out into the fear.

Somewhere a child lies in her crib
repeating the names of her parents, the names of her pets
and her toys as she falls off to sleep.
Somewhere a woman cries in a corner.
Somewhere a man thinks of a woman he loved who left him
who is dead. Somewhere and somewhere. The child
asleep now, the woman untying her apron,
the man going out to the store.

The world flies by in its fragments.
I remember and do not remember.
Voices, promises. Windows and doorways.
Green valleys, red hills.

—Laurie Sheck

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Joseph Farris

favored them or tacitly aided them with the silence of a neutrality that worked against the Saigon government of President Ngo Dinh Diem. Whether this neutrality sprang from fear of guerrilla terrorism or from sympathy made no practical difference: the Saigon government lacked the coöperation of the peasants, and their coöperation was necessary to suppress the Communist-led insurrection.

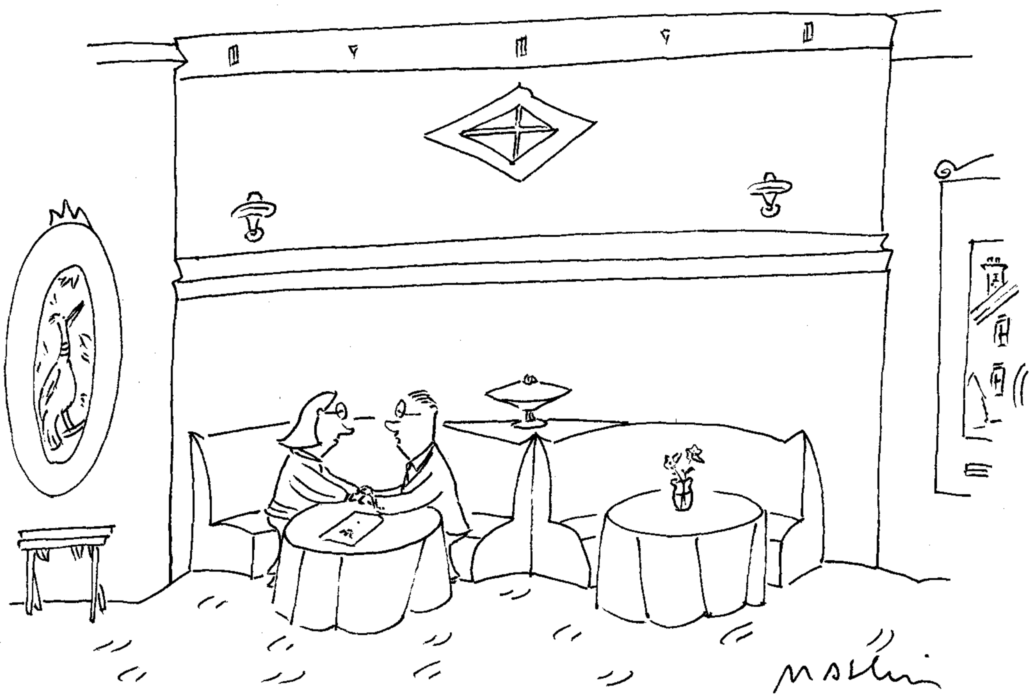
South Vietnam in 1962 was an overwhelmingly rural society. Eighty-five per cent of the population dwelt in the countryside. Vann, with his training in statistics, was struck by the potential for growth of Communist guerrilla power in a society with this profile. Of the two million people in the 7th Division zone, all except the fifteen per cent who lived in My Tho and other towns were currently or potentially within reach of the Vietcong. Militarily, the Vietcong were divided into three groups: Main Force regulars, who operated between provinces; Regional (or provincial) units, also full-time soldiers but operating within a particular province; and the Guerrilla Popular Army, a village-and-hamlet-level militia. There was no question, however, about who still had the raw military power. Vann estimated that two companies of ARVN regulars—about a hundred and eighty men—with their American infantry weapons and artillery and fighter-bombers at their call could go anywhere. In an analogy he drew for one of his staff officers that summer, however, he pointed out that the passage of Saigon's troops through the countryside was like the movement of a ship through the sea: while the ARVN troops were in a given area, their presence pushed the guerrillas into hiding or flight, in the way a ship displaces water; the moment the troops departed, the guerrillas flowed back.

Before Vann left Saigon, he and Porter had agreed on a number of goals they saw as the foundation blocks for a strategy to reverse this losing course and win the war. As soldiers, they made it their priority to develop offensive operations that would corner and destroy the main striking forces of the guerrillas. The current ARVN tactic was appropriately known as "the sweep." It consisted of marching several battalions across the countryside in dispersed columns. Porter had noted that this maneuver might be adequate for moving an armored division across North Germany, but it was hardly effective against guerrillas in rice-delta country. He wanted Vann to take advantage of the dexterity that helicopters offered for landing and shifting assault troops, and devise tactics that would stampede the best Vietcong units into engagements in which they could be annihilated. To initiate these unconventional operations, Vann was to persuade Colonel Huynh Van Cao, the ARVN commander of the 7th Division, to accept a face-saving ploy that would give the Americans proxy control over the division. The euphemism for the ploy was "joint planning." Under joint planning, Vann and Cao and their staffs would ostensibly plan operations together. In reality, the intention was to get Cao to carry out operations that Vann and his staff conceived.

Vann told Richard Ziegler, an infantry captain and former West Point football lineman from Pennsylvania, "You're going to be my planner. We're going to get this thing organized and run it just like an American outfit. We'll have an American on the ground with every unit. I will work with Cao and you will work with the operations officer, and we'll get done what we want done."

When Vann suggested that Ziegler and the ARVN captain who was Cao's G-3 (Operations) officer plan all future actions together, Cao said he thought that it was a good idea. He also consented to other measures that would integrate Vann's advisers so thoroughly into the structure of the division that the question of who was telling whom what to do would be forgotten.

A briefing by the staff for the commanding general is a daily ritual at division-level and higher headquarters in the United States Army. Vann suggested that they hold a joint "command briefing" at 4 P.M. every day the division was not in the field. Cao offered to



"I've never been surer of anything in my life, Pamela—one stuffed pepper will be enough for the two of us."

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convene it in what he called his War Room, on the second floor of his house in My Tho. He had furnished this office elegantly; it was designed to be a replica of Napoleon's map room, and he had constructed a lectern at the front for the briefer. Ziegler and the division operations officer would report on significant actions anywhere in the zone. The G-2 adviser, Captain James Drummond, and his Vietnamese counterpart would give a briefing on the Intelligence outlook, and the G-1 (Personnel and Administration) and G-4 (Logistics) officers and their advisers would also report whenever they had something worth presenting. Cao would sit in a chair near the lectern, with Vann beside him and their chiefs of staff, Major Elmer (Sandy) Faust and Lieutenant Colonel Bui Dinh Dam, behind them. Before Ziegler and the operations officer got together to plan a helicopter assault on the guerrillas, Vann would always insist on a session in the War Room, at which Cao would give "command guidance" to everyone on what he wanted to achieve.

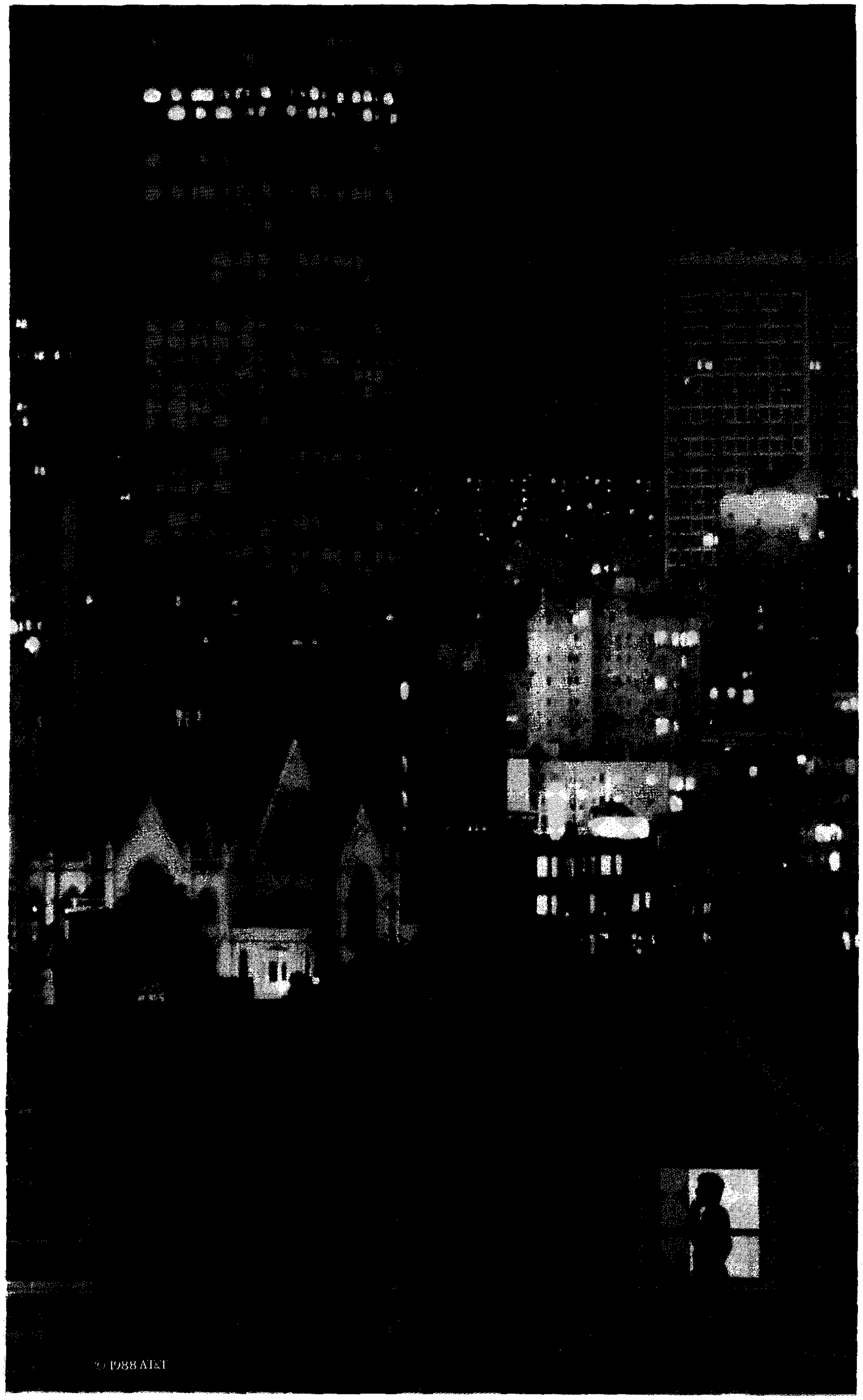
HUYNH VAN CAO was to play a significant role in Vann's career in Vietnam. He was thirty-four years old in the summer of 1962 and had been promoted to command of a division when he was twenty-nine—an extraordinarily rapid rise in any army. Once, when an American correspondent asked Cao how he explained his rocket ascent, he had pointed his swagger stick at himself and said, "Leadership!" He had written a transparently disguised autobiography in the form of a novel titled "He Grows Under Fire." The book held up his career as a model for aspiring military leaders. Cao had a tendency to strut, and he was never without his swagger stick, a gnarled and highly polished piece of exotic dark wood.

The title of Cao's book was somewhat misleading. He had not seen a great deal of combat. Like many sons of Vietnamese mandarin families who had taken the side of the French after the Second World War, Cao had gone into the military because it offered status in an employment-starved society, not because he wanted to fight. He should not have chosen the profession of soldiering, because he had no vocation for making war. He lacked the nerves of a soldier. During one operation when his nerves undid him, he ran out of the command tent, vomited, and ordered the artillery to stop firing a barrage in support of an infantry unit engaged with the guerrillas. The noise upset him too much, he said. He did possess a semblance of military competence, as distinguished from combativeness, thanks to superficial schooling by the French and United States Armies. He had completed a series of three-month courses at the Command and General Staff College, at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and at other Army schools in the United States. As he was both intelligent and glib, he was able to make this semblance pass for actual competence in the eyes of visiting American generals, because they never saw him under stress.

In any case, competence had little to do with Cao's double-time promotions and his holding command of the 7th Division astride the main road thirty-five miles south of Saigon. He had been appointed division commander because he was a Central Vietnamese and a Roman Catholic who was born and educated in the former imperial capital of Hue, Diem's home city, and because his family was known to the Ngo Dinhs, the President's family. With the exception of an interlude during the latter half of the nineteen-fifties, Diem's regime had been marked by turmoil ever since the United States had maneuvered him into power in Saigon in 1954. In 1960, ARVN paratroop officers had revolted, and as recently as February, 1962, two pilots of the Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF) had tried to assassinate Diem, his brother and political counselor, Ngo Dinh Nhu, and Nhu's wife, Madame Nhu, by bombing and strafing the Presidential palace in Saigon. Diem had foiled the 1960 coup and he and his brother and sister-in-law had escaped the assassination attempt without harm, but both events had reinforced his fear of his own armed forces.

Cao's first duty was to be prepared at all times to rush his troops to Saigon to save his patron and the first family if dissident elements of the armed forces should launch another coup. Diem had a special radio-telephone network that reached directly from the palace to Cao and the other division commanders and to most of the province chiefs. Cao had turned his house in My Tho into a second headquarters, with a communications facility, so that it could serve as

You're enough to
keep us awake nights.



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an alternative command post if disloyal subordinates should seize the main one.

In the beginning, Captain Ziegler wondered about the usefulness of the daily briefings and command-guidance sessions. They were artificial in their formality, like training models at the Infantry School at Fort Benning. He soon saw that Vann was using them to encourage Cao's ego to flower. Cao liked to forget that he was a colonel, and to put on the airs of a general. He enjoyed expounding in broad strategic terms. At one of the first sessions, as Cao got carried away with himself, Vann whispered to Ziegler, "Don't worry about what he's saying. I'll tell you what to do after we get back to the Seminary." (The 7th Division advisers had their offices and living quarters in a former Catholic seminary half a mile up the main road toward Saigon.) That was how Vann handled the situation: he would outline on a wall-length map in the Seminary's combined Operations and Intelligence Office a plan for a helicopter assault on a guerrilla area. Ziegler would weave Vann's ideas and his own into the finished plan; Vann approved it; Cao accepted it. Some guerrillas were killed; Cao was pleased.

Cao also liked Vann's proposals for training the Saigon troops in tactics of fire and maneuver at the squad and platoon levels—a prerequisite to besting the guerrillas in the small-unit combat that was characteristic of this war. The state of training of the ten thousand ARVN regulars in the division zone would have sufficed if there had been no war—they could march well enough for a parade—but the majority of the twenty-eight thousand territorial troops would have had trouble parading. Vann had discovered that, despite more than one and two-thirds billion dollars in American military aid between 1955 and mid-1961, and the supposed guidance of a six-hundred-and-fifty-man training mission for most of those years, few troops knew how to adjust the sights of their rifles and carbines well enough to hit a target, let alone a guerrilla. Vann moved to remedy this lack of training by laying out a three-week "refresher course" for the division regulars.

Cao did not listen happily to arguments put forward for another priority that Vann and Porter had agreed upon—halting the growth of the Communist-led insurrection by depriving the Vietcong of the freedom of the night. Cao's face would go blank or he would frown as Vann explained why they had to teach the troops to patrol and lay ambushes after dark. "It is not safe to go out at night," Cao would say. Most of the five province chiefs in the division zone regarded night activity with the same fear that Cao did. They and Cao had been having their units report fictitious night patrols and ambushes to fob off the Americans. If any units did go out, they went no farther than the nearest canal for a nap on the bank. When persuasion failed, Vann turned to bravado. He issued an order requiring all American officers and any sergeants involved in combat training to go out on at least one night patrol or ambush a week. Cao and the province chiefs could have refused to coöperate and made a fool of Vann; the Americans could not, after all, venture out on their own. But Cao knew that Porter was behind Vann on the issue, and that Harkins had also been preaching the virtue of night activity to President

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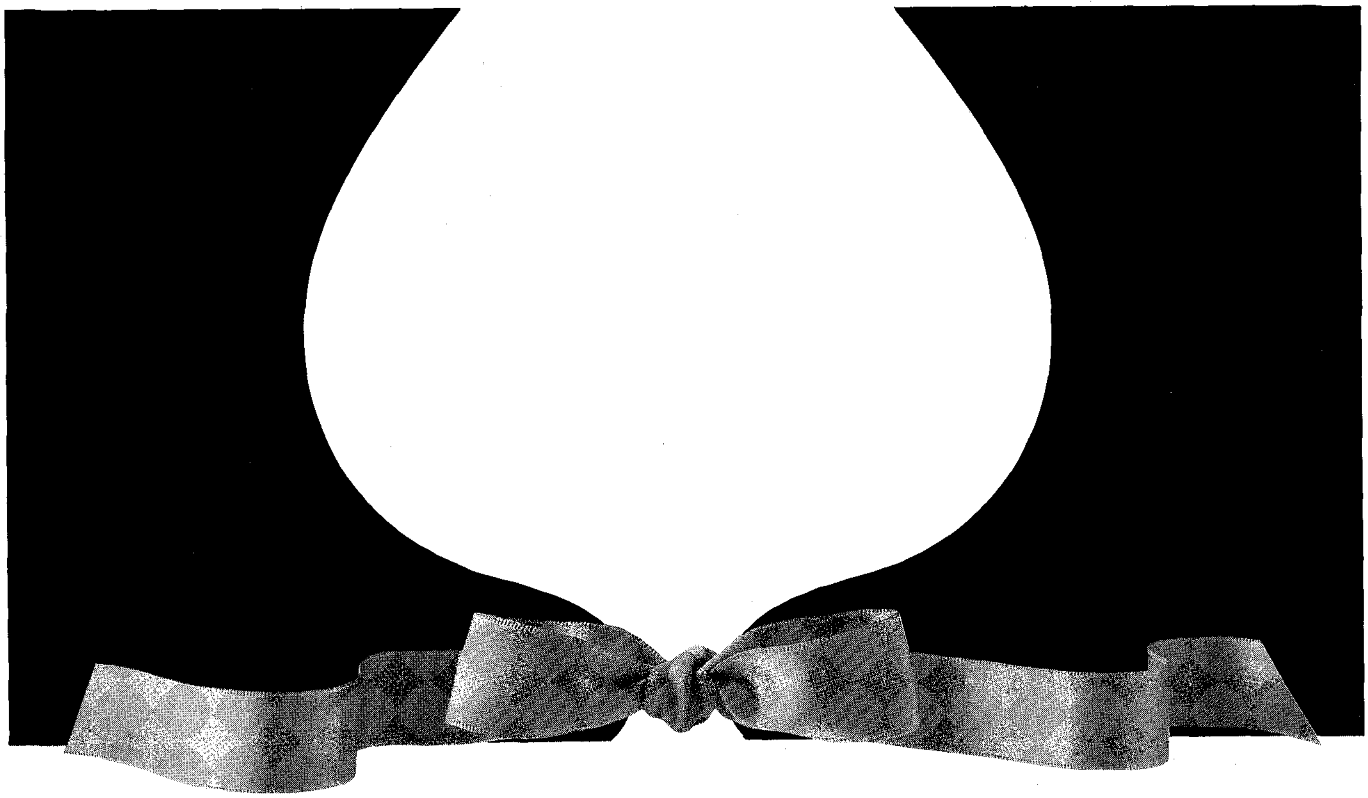
This June 19th...



*Void where prohibited by law. 80 Proof Cognac, Imported by © W.A. Taylor & Co., Miami, Florida 1988

Diem. Ever since the previous November, when the Kennedy Administration tried to push Diem into political and administrative reforms as the price for United States military intervention, Diem's relations with senior American officials had been improving. The guidance from the Presidential palace was, in effect, to accommodate the Americans where it would do no harm. Cao and the province chiefs acquiesced. A consistent, if limited, routine of night patrols and ambushes began. Vann set the example by travelling to a different regular or territorial unit at least once a week, and sometimes twice, for a night foray. Since he could function on a couple of hours' sleep, being up most of the night did not bother him.

Vann made it a point—over the objections of Cao, who was afraid that his chief adviser might be killed or captured—to go out with squad-size groups of about a dozen men. Vann knew there was a better chance of laying a successful ambush with a small unit, and also less chance of being counter-ambushed in the dark. To his chagrin, he was rarely able to ambush guerrillas. He learned that the reason was not a lack of Vietcong activity in the countryside at night. He told Porter that they had a lot of work ahead of them with this army. These soldiers—both the regulars and the territorials—felt themselves inferior to the enemy; they were afraid to risk a man-to-man fight with the guerrillas. He noticed that almost every time he heard the approach of what might be a group of Vietcong coming down the trail and into the snare, one of the Saigon soldiers would give the ambush away by coughing or snapping the bolt of a weapon. It occurred too often to be accidental. Porter had suspected this attitude of inferiority and was relieved that, for the first time in this war, the United States had an infantry officer with experience and perspective who insisted on working at the cutting edge. To solve any of these problems, the Americans needed information and understanding. Vann was providing both, because Vann had rank and credentials. What he reported could not be dismissed by the generals and the headquarters staff colonels as the imaginings of a green captain.

Vann fulfilled his vow to Ziegler that every separate unit participating in a combat operation would have an American adviser attached to it. His purpose went beyond acquiring proxy control. He thought that the Saigon troops might behave more aggressively if the commander always had an American officer or sergeant by his side to encourage and assist him. American élan might prove infectious.

Under Vann, the atmosphere in the advisory detachment became supercharged. When the advisers returned to the Seminary exhausted after a couple of days in the sun and the muck of the paddy fields, the familiar voice would call out, in its high-pitched rasp, "Come on! Let's get those volleyball teams out there!" He had rested less than anyone, but in a few minutes he would have them all out in the courtyard at the net. If his team began to lose, he would yell and bang a fist against one of the posts holding up the net, to provoke his side to greater effort.

Having a leader like Vann made these men cocky and gave them a sense of adventure. Soldiers respect a leader

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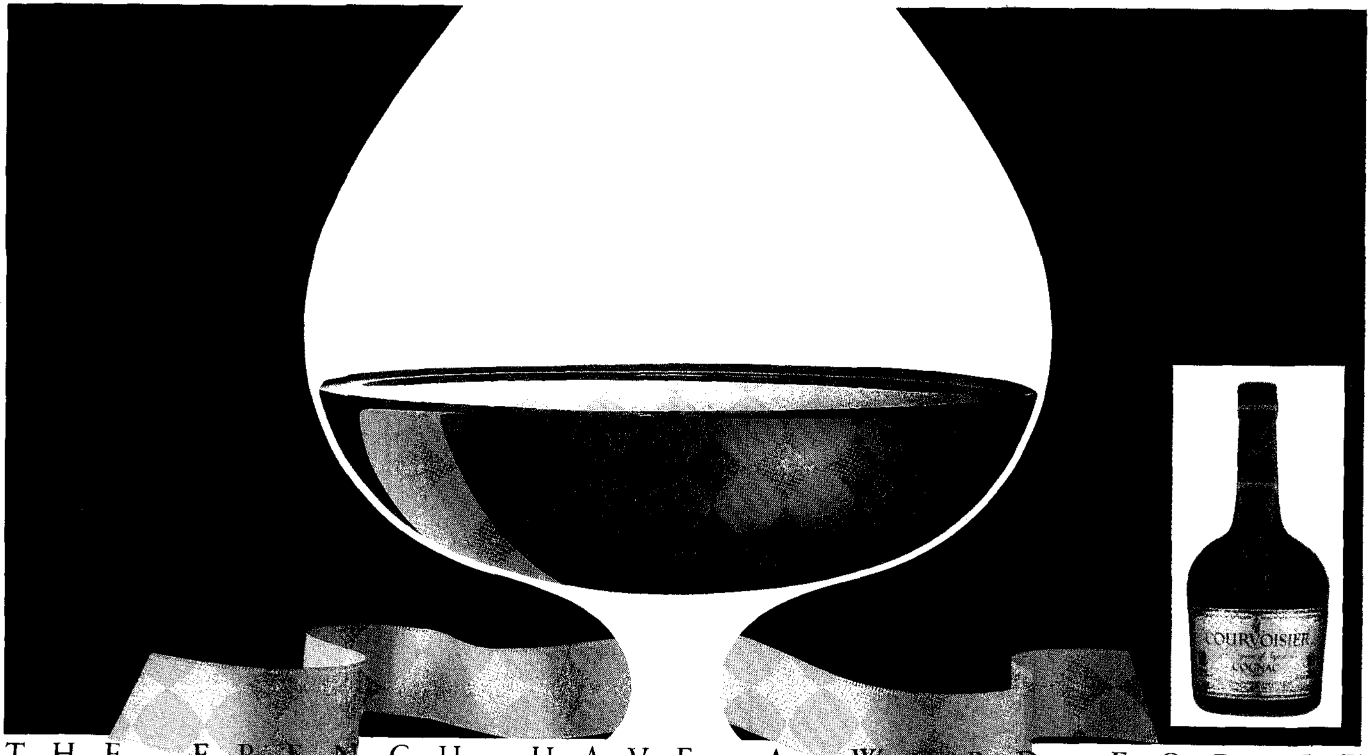

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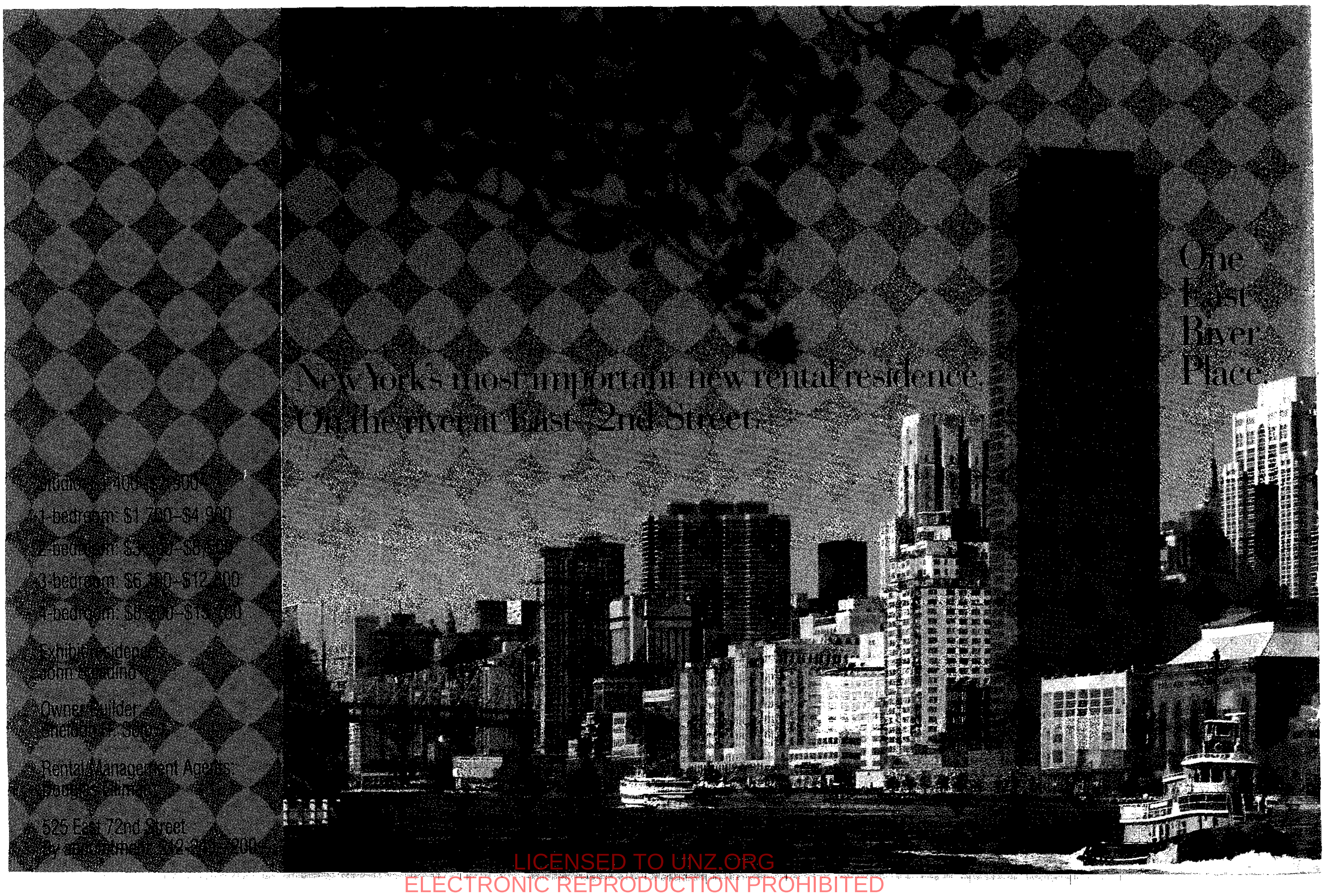
who is competent. They admire a leader who is competent and bold. When the officer is an accomplished student of war, leads boldly, and also savors gambling his own life, he acquires a mystique. Cautious officers shake their heads at this love of danger, and condemn it as daredeviltry, which it often is, but they secretly admire it and wish they had as much faith in their own luck, and the power to lead lesser men which the mystique confers. Vann's luck was so good it was called "the Vann luck."

Vann knew which of the secondary dirt roads the Vietcong had ditched and which were still usable, because he explored them in a jeep on frequent trips to the district centers and to outposts and hamlets that interested him. The normal American method of surveying roads was from a helicopter or an observation plane. It was safer: the sky was free of mines and ambushes. Vann claimed that surveying by aircraft was not good enough; to find out how much of the countryside the Vietcong controlled and how much was still accessible, it was necessary to go out on the ground and test. "Hell, you can drive these roads with a ninety-five-per-cent chance of survival if you just use your head," he would say. He avoided patterns, trying always to return by a different route. He never lingered in one place long enough to give the guerrillas in the area time to come after him or to organize an ambush down the road. He refused to take along the reinforced platoon of troops considered the minimum escort, because an escort would slow him down. He drove fast, and he always drove himself. Cao had assigned him an ARVN soldier as a driver, but Vann would put the soldier in the back seat with a carbine. If there was a scrape and a Vietnamese driver was wounded or lost his nerve, he might stop. Vann wanted to make sure this could not happen, because he was convinced that salvation lay in movement, and was determined never to be taken prisoner.

Porter did not try to restrain him, knowing that if he ordered Vann not to take such risks he would take them anyway. From Vann's ground reconnaissance, as from his night patrols, Porter was getting observations he would otherwise never have received. On visits to the detachment, when Vann would mention some place he wanted to see and invite Porter to ride with him, Porter, instead of trying to stop him, would kid him about his daredeviltry. "Is this another of your suicide drives, John?" Porter would ask.

BECAUSE during his first year in Vietnam Vann saw the solution to the conflict primarily in military terms, he focussed on the initial goal that he and Porter had agreed upon—the destruction of the principal striking forces of the Vietcong through surprise helicopter assaults. As far as Jim Drummond, the intelligence officer, could estimate with the information available to him by the end of May, there were about two thousand Main Force Vietcong regulars operating within the five provinces of the division zone, and about three thousand Regional guerrillas. The Communist strategy was self-perpetuating. The guerrillas were capturing more and more weapons, which enabled them to launch more and bigger attacks. Consequently, the Saigon government's



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Civil Guard and Self-Defense Corps (SDC) militia were becoming more and more intimidated and keeping closer and closer to their outposts and the district centers, ceding more and more of the peasantry to the guerrillas. The quickest way to halt the momentum of this revolution, Vann believed, was to break the point of the spear. If the regular and provincial guerrillas were killed off or scattered, the Communists would no longer be able to mass a force for big ambushes of road convoys and of Saigon's territorial troops as they marched through the countryside during the day, trying to assert the regime's authority. The Vietcong would not be able to overrun outposts at night with quite their current ease. Security would start to be reëstablished, and progress toward an enduring pacification could begin. "Security may be ten per cent of the problem or it may be ninety per cent, but, whichever it is, it's the first ten per cent or the first ninety per cent," Vann would say. "Without security, nothing we do will last."

Once the process of destroying the Main Force and Regional guerrillas was well under way, the cycle of the war would turn against the Vietcong, Vann believed. This conclusion was based on a conviction he shared with virtually all Americans in Vietnam in this early period—the conviction that the Vietnamese peasants were essentially apolitical. The fact that the majority of the peasants in the division zone appeared to be either sympathetic to the Vietcong or neutral did not mean that they were expressing a political judgment, according to American thinking, for they lacked the political sophistication to make such a judgment. Except for a minority who had specific grievances against local officials of the regime, the peasants were simply responding to whichever side was stronger where they lived. What all Asian peasants wanted most, Vann was certain, was peace and security in which to till their land; they did not care whether those who established the law and order were Communists or capitalists. When the farmers saw the guerrilla battalions and companies being destroyed one after another, they would realize that the Communists were not going to win. Provided the Saigon side also stopped abusing them, the peasants would begin to lean toward the regime. Intelligence would improve, because more peasants would be willing to talk. It would become easier to target and destroy the rest of the Vietcong's main striking forces. The Communists would also lose the broad base of their armed strength, at the village and hamlet levels. The Guerrilla Popular Army consisted of part-time soldiers—farmers during the day and fighters at night, on orders from above or when the spirit moved them. Drummond estimated that there were about ten thousand local guerrillas in the 7th Division's area. They were a pool of manpower in training for the higher forces; an omnipresent intelligence network; a source of scouts and guides who knew the terrain and the attitudes of their neighbors and of the militia in the nearest Saigon outpost; a waiting assembly of porters to haul ammunition and to carry away the wounded and the dead during battle; and an ever-present army to enforce the desires of the hidden Communist administration.

These part-time local guerrillas would "fade back into the woodwork," Vann reasoned, and become peaceful full-time farmers again. The Saigon authorities, with American assistance, could then start the slow task of identifying and arresting the secret Communist agents who had fomented this insurrection and were directing the clandestine government in its daily activity of marshalling the peasantry to support the guerrilla fighting units. The economic and social aid that the United States was providing would further shift the allegiance of the farmers. The gift of drilled wells for clean drinking water and lessons in how to build latrines on solid ground were going to liberate the farmers from the parasites and intestinal diseases that afflicted them. They would be given dispensaries for regular medical care; elementary schools to eliminate illiteracy among their children; fat Yorkshire hogs to replace the lean black native variety; and improved seed and chemical fertilizer for better rice yields. Vann thought that it would probably require ten years to create a healthy rural society of satisfied peasants and effective local government, impervious to Communist attempts to renew the insurgency. It should not take him more than six months to smash the Main Force and Regional guerrillas in the northern Delta and begin to return peace to the most important part of the country.

IN the summer of 1962, Vann felt confident that the flaws in Cao's character, to the extent he could then perceive them, would not prevent him from turning Cao into an aggressive military leader. He believed that if he succeeded often enough in making Cao appear to be a tiger Cao's vanity would

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force him to play the part, even if he was only a pussycat.

Through June and into July, whenever the division killed a score or two of guerrillas in an operation, Vann would flatter Cao by telling him what a fine commander he was. He would praise Cao in the same way to various reporters, including me, who came down to cover these engagements, while Cao stood by listening and smiling. Nothing Vann said in public ever betrayed his game. Instead, after dinner in the mess hall the night before an operation he would give the assembled correspondents a pep talk on "emphasizing the positive" in our stories in order to encourage our ally. It amused Sandy Faust, Vann's chief of staff, and Ziegler and the other officers at the command post to watch Vann work on Cao during an operation. To try to get Cao to direct the action the way he wanted, Vann would resort to little devices like "I know what you're going to do next, because you're that kind of a commander." Before Cao had a chance to ask what he meant, Vann would pretend that he had heard Cao ask, and would describe the move. Often Cao would smile and say yes, that was exactly what he had in mind, and he would issue the appropriate order. If Cao did not like the proposal, he would smile just as cheerfully and tell Vann that he had a better idea. Vann did not approve of all of Cao's ideas, but he took care never to contradict him in front of either the American or the Vietnamese staff. Later, in private, he would tell Cao why he objected to the idea.

Cao's behavior strongly suggested that Vann's puppeteering was having the desired effect. He strutted a bit more, his manner grew more pompous, and he also clearly saw advancement of his career in the hero image of him that Vann was projecting and in the fact that his division was killing Vietcong on a scale that none of the other divisions were attaining. Vann told Ziegler he was sure that his handling of Cao would pay off soon in the first "big kill" of the series of hammer blows with which he intended to smash the guerrillas. At the rate the 7th Division forces were harrying the Vietcong, the guerrillas were going to make a truly serious mistake one of these days while attempting to escape a helicopter assault. When that moment came, he was going to kill or capture an entire Vietcong battalion.

Vann saw the possibility of such a victory in an unorthodox attack that he conceived of in June, and he gradually stiffened Cao's nerve to launch it in the latter half of July. He intended to show the guerrillas that the darkness did not belong entirely to them. He would stage the first night helicopter assault of the war to rouse the Vietcong from their sleep in the twilight just before dawn.

He was hoping to catch and annihilate the 504th Main Force Battalion, which Drummond had tracked to a far section of the Plain of Reeds, a vast guerrilla-base area along the Cambodian border. Intelligence indicated that elements of a second regular battalion might be with the 504th. One company of the 504th was reported to be harboring with sympathetic inhabitants of several hamlets at the confluence of two small rivers about nine miles from the border. The company was preparing to move out of these hamlets some night soon and attack an outpost that protected a large agricultural settlement of Catholic refugees from North Vietnam. Drummond thought it likely that a second company of regulars or provincial guerrillas was in the vicinity of these hamlets to reinforce the first for the planned attack, and that there was a good chance of discovering other units from the 504th or the second battalion during followup helicopter landings in the daytime.

Vann selected the river junction for the predawn landing, by Marine helicopters, because the Y where the two streams joined should be relatively easy for the pilots to distinguish in the dim light. In a series of five subsequent landings, they would first try to snare any guerrillas who fled north up the larger stream formed by the two smaller ones, and would then probe at suspect spots along a canal that ran west from the river junction to Cambodia. Cao would have his command post fifteen miles to the east in a hangar beside a dirt airstrip at Moc Hoa—a huddle of shoddy wooden and thatched houses around a church, a pagoda, and a province chief's house about forty miles northwest of My Tho. Vann would hold three companies in reserve there.

Vann and Cao agreed that as soon as they flushed out the guerrillas they

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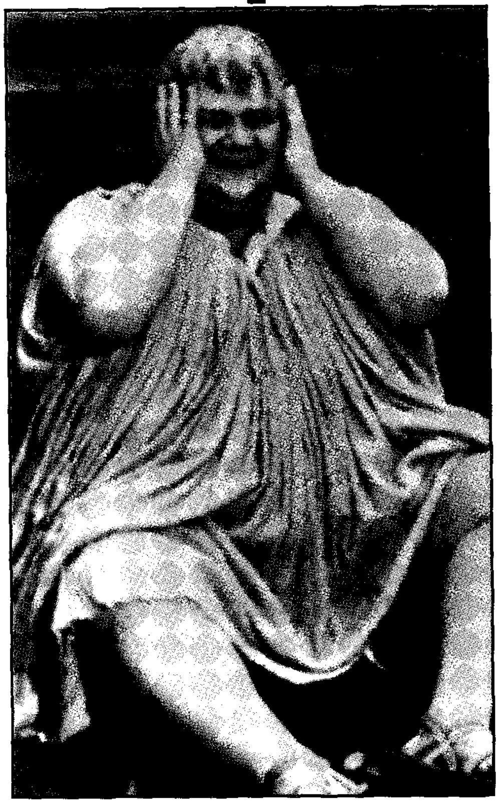

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would drop the reserves in front of them and wipe them out. They would have nearly thirty helicopters, to give them ideal flexibility, and would land all the troops at their disposal in the open terrain of reed fields and swamps. Some of the landings were certain to prove fruitless. The task forces involved in these could then be converted into further reserves, for the helicopters to pick up and shift to wherever they were needed to trap fleeing guerrillas.

At 5 A.M. on July 20, 1962, sixteen Marine helicopters circled in the darkness and descended one behind another onto an airfield outlined by dots of flame; Vann's advisers had placed pails of sand soaked with oil around the edges of the field and set them afire. Two companies of ARVN troops, organized into three assault groups, climbed into the helicopters. Forty-five minutes later, the flight leaders spotted the Y-shaped sheen of water cutting through the deeper blackness of trees around houses along the river banks. The helicopters plummeted toward the three designated landing sites at the river junction, the pilots shutting off their outside navigation lights in case any Vietcong gunners might be awake. The Saigon officers and the American advisers shouted above the racket of the engines, and the troops pulled themselves to their feet and faced the open doors. The wheels of the helicopters splashed into flooded paddy fields just beyond the trees at 6:03 A.M., fifteen minutes before dawn, and nearly two hundred men leaped out into knee-high water and muck and began sloshing toward the houses. The Marine aviators lifted off and headed back to Moc Hoa, to refuel and join thirteen Army H-21s, called "Flying Bananas," because of their bent-pipe shape, from Saigon's Tan Son Nhut Air Base, for the subsequent landings. A twin-engine C-47 transport arrived overhead, and the crew chief tossed out a parachute flare, which consumed what was left of the darkness in the glare of an artificial sun.

Vann was out of luck. The hamlets contained only women, children, and old men. In the back seat of an Army L-19 spotter plane, where he spent the early part of the morning searching for guerrillas and talking to his advisers over the radio, Vann cursed because the first night helicopter assault of the war, executed with such finesse by the Marines, had come to nothing. The company of the 504th Main Force Battalion that Drummond had thought was at the river junction had pulled out the day before.

A separate platoon of provincial guerrillas had been in one of the hamlets but had managed to get away to the north up the larger river, because the Army helicopters were half an hour late coming from Saigon and so threw off schedule the landing of the Ranger company that was supposed to sever this escape route. Vann then flew back to Moc Hoa to try to resolve an unforeseen problem in refuelling the helicopters. He was unable to do anything, and the next landing was delayed by nearly two and a half hours. It, too, struck at an empty target. Vann began to wince at the embarrassment of his large expectations turning up zero.

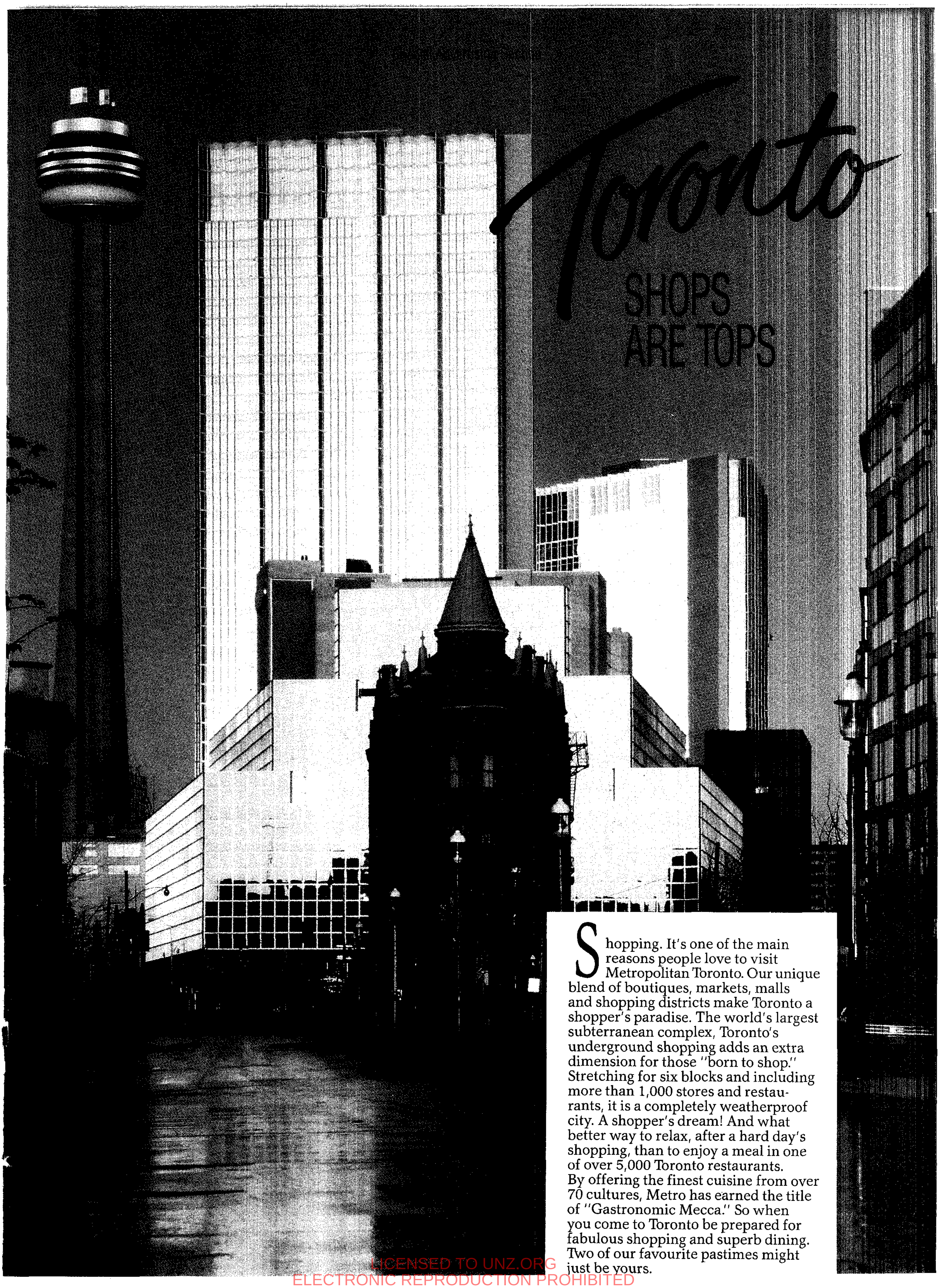
The fourth landing was designed to search the vicinity of two hamlets seven and a half miles up the canal that ran west from the river junction to Cambodia. Vann had selected these two hamlets on the assumption that the Vietcong might have established base camps near them, because of the convenience of the canal for transport. Employing all twenty-nine helicopters, he simultaneously dropped two task forces north of the hamlets at 9:50 A.M. The troops ran directly into an estimated hundred and fifty guerrillas. Vann had remained at the command post for this lift. The radio reports said that some of the Vietcong were firing automatic weapons and that many were dressed in khaki uniforms—indications that they were almost certainly regulars. Drummond's information had been essentially correct after all. Vann had made up for its lack of precision by letting the terrain suggest to him where guerrillas might be located and by probing to test his hunch.

The Vietcong had seen the illuminating flares during the predawn assault and had watched the helicopters make the subsequent landings. They had assumed that the net would not spread far enough to touch them—that they would be safe staying where they were instead of breaking up into small groups and disappearing across the border into Cambodia, just a couple of miles farther west along the canal. They compounded this first mistake with one of war's unforgiving errors: they ran to the killing ground that their enemy had prepared for them.

Vann knew that by attacking this close to the border he would be tempting any guerrillas who might be in or near the hamlets to run for Cambodia. The Vietcong had dug foxholes, and camouflaged them expertly, in the higher ground of trails that cut through clumps of woods and brush where the troops had landed, just above the hamlets. Instead of holing up in these fortifications until night gave them an opportunity to escape, they panicked after a few moments of shooting, as Vann had thought they would, and, abandoning the cover of brush and trees, fled in disorder toward the hope of sanctuary.

Five minutes after this fourth landing, a VNAF observer pilot in an L-19 spotted a mob of about a hundred Vietcong starting to rush across the open fields of reeds, flooded at this midpoint in the monsoon season. The reeds were two to six feet tall, and the soft ground underneath was covered with one to three feet of water. Some of the guerrillas were foolishly attempting to wade through the reeds, and others were poling small sampans that held half a dozen men. The observer asked permission to call in the fighter-bombers. It was the moment for which Vann had been waiting since May. He advised Cao to let the planes go to work until the helicopters were refuelled and could drop the first reserve task force ahead of the guerrillas to start the process of encircling and annihilating them. Cao was never averse to an air strike. He issued the order.

The observer pilot radioed the planes on station overhead and then banked his wisp of an aircraft to sweep over the guerrillas and mark them by tossing down a white smoke grenade. It was hardly necessary. The fighter-bomber pilots—Vietnamese trained in France or the United States, and Americans from an air-commando squadron at Bien Hoa Air Base, just north of the capital—could easily see the sampans and the bunches of tiny figures pushing in a frenzy through the reeds. The sun was high in the sky now, and had burned away the ground fog that might earlier have given some concealment to the movements of these



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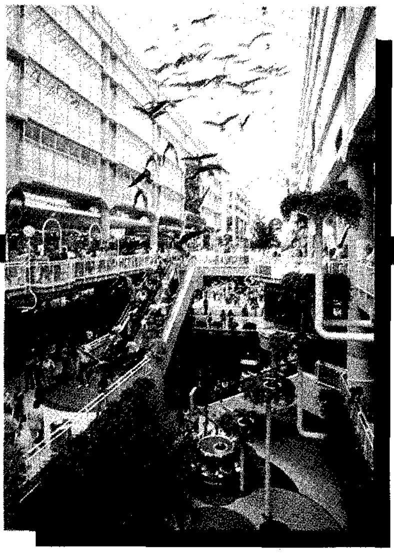

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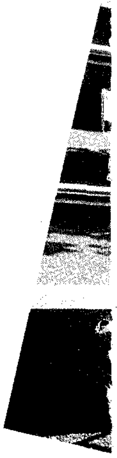

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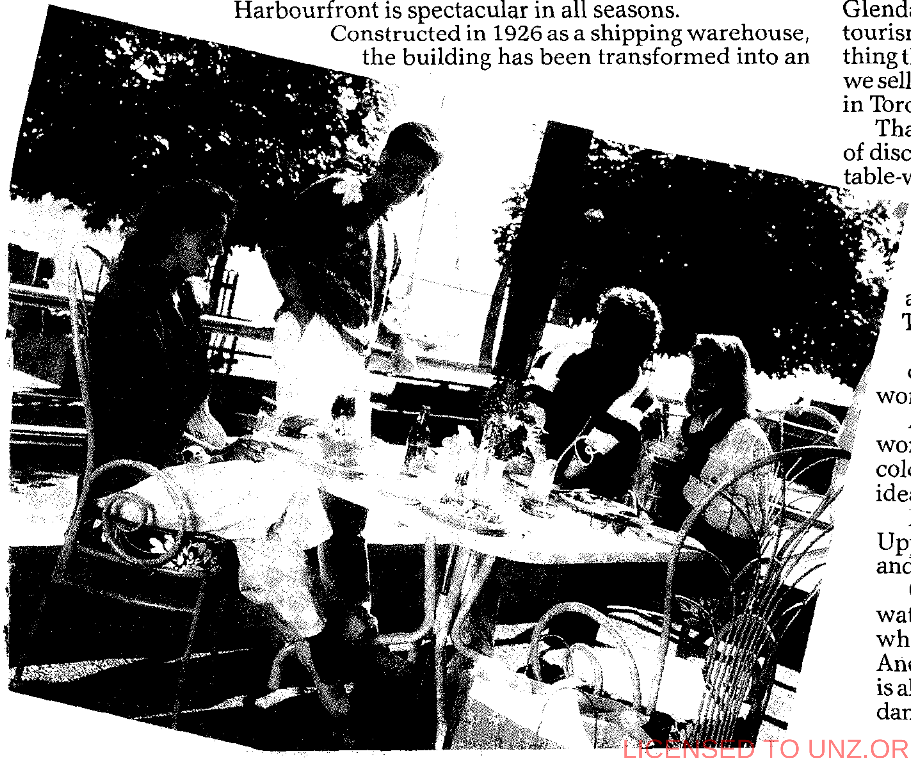

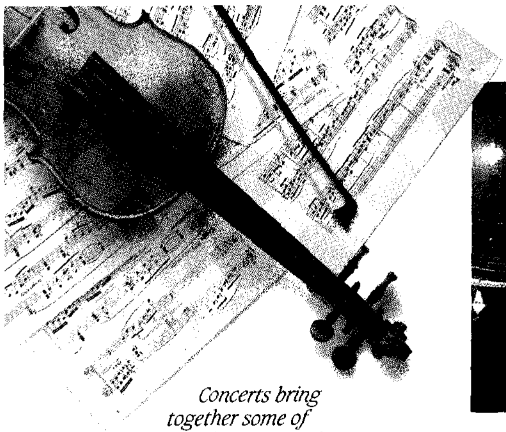

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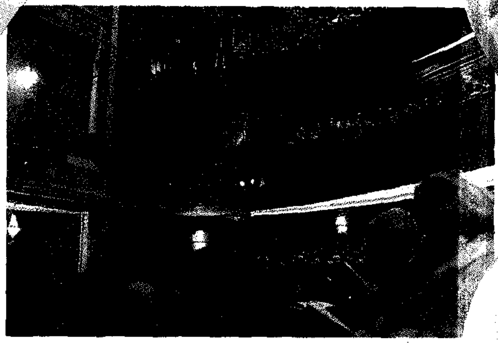

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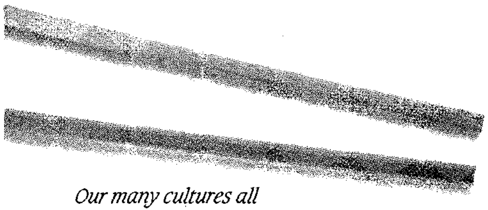

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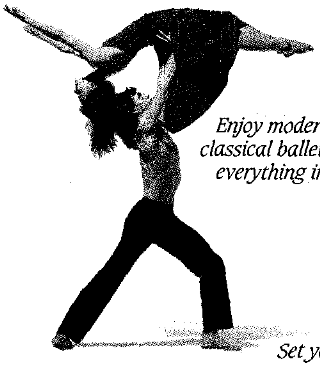

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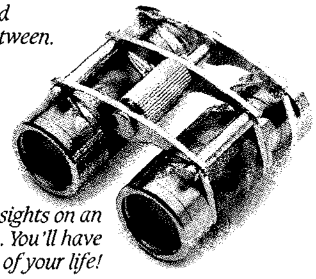

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fear-crazed men. The sun's rays glinted off the silver fuselages when the pilots dived.

The bullets from the .50-calibre machine guns and 20-millimetre cannon churned the water during the strafing runs. The rockets exploded on the sampans, breaking them apart. The shiny aluminum cannisters of napalm tumbled end over end and burst on the reed fields, engulfing a group of guerrillas in a great orange flower. The pilots had rarely had such good shooting. The radio frequencies of this hybrid air force were alive with a mixture of Vietnamese, French, and English as the pilots talked excitedly with each other and the observer directing their runs. Their planes—propeller-driven AD-6 Skyraiders and converted T-28 Trojan trainers—were better than jets for this work because the pilots could dive more slowly and see better to strafe and rocket. To the pilots, with the wind rushing past the cockpit canopy in the descent, the fuselage shuddering from the recoil of the guns, and the whoosh of the rockets darting out from under the wings, the drama seemed like one of those Second World War movies when the Army Air Corps gave the Japanese or the Germans what they deserved. The little figures jumped out of the sampans, wild to get away, as the bullets raced up the water toward them. Out in the open like this, escape was pure chance—a chance that was often missed. Soon the figures lay still and bodies floated among the reeds. Vann's advisers later counted more than forty dead here. The Saigon troops also blasted away at the panicked guerrillas with their rifles and automatic weapons, cutting down some, but the advisers afterward concluded that the planes had done the greater part of the killing.

While the fighter-bombers made run after run and the helicopters were being refuelled, Vann got Cao organized to reap the full harvest of this opportunity into which so much planning had gone. He created two more reserve task forces to supplement the one they already had. With three reserves, they could cut off the escape of these guerrillas and any others who might be flushed, no matter which way they turned. The airmen had forty-five minutes of exuberant shooting before the helicopter refuelling was completed and the first reserve lifted off from Moc Hoa airstrip, to be dropped farther north, between the Vietcong and the border. The assault troops that had landed at 9:50 A.M. were ordered to stop and hold in a "blocking position." The first reserve task force was to drive south in the classic "hammer and anvil" tactic. Those guerrillas who had managed to escape the planes by hiding in the reeds were to be killed or captured by the descending "hammer" of the reserve or, if they fled back south, were to be caught on the "anvil" of the troops in the block. Vann took off in a separate helicopter to encourage the Saigon commanders and to see for himself what was happening, so that he could guide Cao accurately now that the action had reached the critical stage.

As the helicopters descended with the first reserve, the pilots saw more guerrillas heading toward the border farther to the west. Vann wasn't worried about how to deal with them. He and Cao had discussed what to do before he left the airstrip. Just to make sure, he radioed Sandy Faust, who was in charge of the advisory side of the command post in his absence, and told him to recommend that Cao commit the second reserve northwest of these guerrillas with similar instructions to drive down onto the "anvil." Faust said that he had already made the recommendation and that Cao had agreed.

AT this point, in a puzzling way, things began to go wrong. Vann flew over the scene of the air strikes and saw the evidence of the planes' success floating among the reeds. He then stopped to see the battalion commander in charge of the assault troops who were holding in place as the "anvil." Everyone was jubilant. They had found an 81-mm. mortar to add to the numerous small arms abandoned by the terrified guerrillas. Vann congratulated them and took off again, to check on the southward progress of the first reserve task force. As soon as the helicopter gained altitude, he saw, to his surprise, that the reserve had not moved from the spot where they

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had jumped out of the helicopters. He landed to find out why, and was told by the ARVN captain that he had been ordered by the regimental commander to "maintain a blocking position." That didn't make sense, Vann said. The assault troops were already blocking, and before the reserve left Moc Hoa Colonel Cao had ordered the captain to push south as fast as he could. The regimental commander had just instructed him over the radio to block, and not advance, the captain replied. Where in hell did the major running the regiment get the authority to overrule Colonel Cao, Vann wanted to know.

The captain looked at him blankly and said nothing.

Didn't he realize that the Vietcong he was supposed to be killing and capturing were escaping while he dawdled? Vann was yelling.

The captain shrugged.

Vann asked him to call the regimental headquarters, explain the situation, and ask permission to move. Then he flew back to the assault troops to see if the regimental commander had instructed them to march north instead. No, they were supposed to hold in place. He returned to the reserve. The captain said he had called the headquarters as Vann had asked, and had again been ordered to stay put. Vann radioed his adviser at the regimental headquarters, set up in a village center south of the operation, and also called Faust, to have Cao dispel this confusion right away. He got no results. Vann tried to argue the reserve captain into advancing on his, Vann's, responsibility. The captain refused. Vann flew back to the assault troops again and attempted to persuade the captain there to advance, also to no avail. Forty minutes of this maddening Ping-Pong went by, and every minute the Vietcong were getting that much closer to the border. In the meantime, the helicopters did not return to drop the second reserve to the northwest. When Vann radioed Faust for an explanation, Faust said that Cao seemed to be reneging on his earlier agreement. Cao would not issue the order. Vann flew back to Moc Hoa to set matters right himself.

He jumped from the helicopter, ran into the headquarters in the hangar, and told Cao that he had to get the first reserve in motion and load the second into the waiting helicopters right away or the Vietcong were going to escape.

Cao said he couldn't do that.

"Why not?" Vann asked.

"Because the commander of the 10th Regiment does not wish to share his big victory with another regiment," Cao said. The 10th Regiment commander was the major who had ordered the reserve not to move. One of his battalions, split into two task forces, had made the original landing. The reserves were from other regiments.

Vann was so astonished that he was at a rare loss for words. "What?" he said, staring into Cao's face.

Cao calmly repeated what he had said. He smiled. Vann had to strain to control himself. He drew Cao off to one side to avoid embarrassing him in front of their subordinates. Cao could not let the vanity of some major stop them from winning the war, he said. Cao was the division commander. He could simply override his subordinate by issuing an order. There were no risks. Their troops far outnumbered the Vietcong. Cao had lost a mere two men killed and a dozen wounded. Vann estimated that there were probably two hundred guerrillas still alive and heading for Cambodia. Cao could not allow the Communists to escape like this to fight another day. He had a reputation to uphold as an aggressive commander. Today was his opportunity to accomplish an unprecedented feat. He could bag a whole battalion. If he didn't act, he would look like a coward.

Cao was unmoved. He said he was not going to upset his regimental commander.

Vann eventually argued Cao into marching the first reserve south, but it did not start until 2 P.M., almost three hours after it had landed. As a result of Vann's persistence, Cao obtained a prize: the reserve troops found a heavy .50-calibre machine gun abandoned by the Vietcong. Seven guerrillas hiding under the water and breathing through hollow reeds were also discovered. They were shot as they vainly tried to run, and more small arms were captured. Cao was not at all hesitant about gathering up the weapons. By the time Vann returned, he had already sent helicopters out to bring in the 81-mm. mortar and small arms and had called the Joint General Staff in Saigon to boast of his treasure. Vann nearly regretted gaining Cao the .50-calibre

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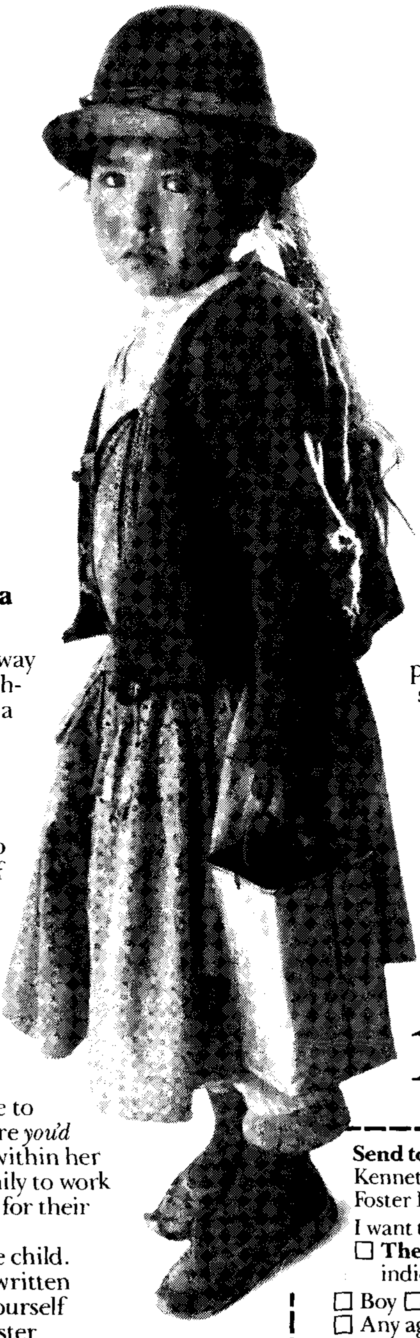

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when the ARVN general who was chief of staff of the J.G.S. and an ARVN colonel flew out to exclaim over the mortar and the machine gun and the twenty-seven small arms captured, most of them French bolt-action rifles. Cao had soldiers stack the weapons in front of the hangar on tables covered with white sheets, like trophies at a banquet.

THE headquarters ceased to function as Cao, in his ecstasy, abandoned further direction of the operation, and most of his staff did the same. "It was only with the greatest of difficulty that the interest of the Division Commander and his staff could be refocussed on continuing," Vann said later, in the temperate language of his official report. He was flabbergasted that the ARVN general saw nothing wrong with the way Cao was behaving and acted no better himself. Cao had also let eighty to a hundred additional guerrillas escape on the eastern end of the operation while Vann was out futilely flogging himself in his effort to get the reserve to advance. These Vietcong were probably the company of the 504th Battalion that Vann had just missed catching by one day at the river junction. Neither of the two Saigon battalions that flushed the guerrillas would pursue them, despite the pleas of their advisers. Nor would Cao respond when Vann called for pursuit after his return. A B-26 Marauder from the American air-commando squadron had been on station overhead, and Cao had loosed an air strike with his customary alacrity the moment the guerrillas were sighted. The pilots claimed to have killed twenty-five. Vann carefully inspected the scene from a helicopter. This time, the airmen had blasted reeds and bushes. There were no bodies.

Vann received even worse news the next day. Cao had forfeited an opportunity to destroy a resource more valuable to the Communist cause than a battalion of guerrilla regulars. The clumps of woods above the hamlet had hidden the most important Vietcong training camp in the northern Delta. Interrogation of eleven prisoners captured disclosed that one of the units hit was a specialized company of instructors. A lot of the Vietcong in the camp had been youths from provincial units all over the region who had been selected for assignment to Main Force battalions. They had been receiving advanced instruction for four months in weapons and tactics and in camouflage and other techniques of guerrilla warfare. Jim Drummond found four thatched-hut classrooms furnished with blackboards under the trees.

The fiasco was the more painful for Vann because it was so unexpected. It had been inconceivable to him twenty-four hours earlier that after he had prepared so meticulously Cao would nullify all. It had been just as inconceivable to him that Cao would confound his theory of human nature by stepping out of the role that Vann had assigned him. In Vann's code, it was unthinkable for an officer to throw away the lives of his soldiers by permitting an enemy to escape, as Cao had done. The Vietcong had been badly hurt, but since approximately three hundred of them had got away there were plenty of survivors to reconstitute their units. The training cadres would be back to train more guerrillas, and the 504th Main Force Battalion would return to overrun more outposts and lay more ambushes.

Raising a public fuss would not only have ended Vann's game with Cao, which he was determined to pursue despite this defeat, but would also lead to his dismissal by General Harkins, because policy was to display a front of cordiality between the advisers and the ARVN commanders. When Malcolm Browne, then a war correspondent for the Associated Press, hitched a ride on a helicopter from Saigon out to Moc Hoa, Vann gave him the impression that all had gone precisely according to plan. The predawn landings by the Marines had been "a beautiful job," he said. "They landed exactly on schedule, and for a change it looks as if we caught the Vietcong completely off guard." After Cao announced that his troops and the planes had killed a record hundred and thirty-one Vietcong, in the biggest success of the war, and that one of the eleven prisoners was the Communist Party representative of a district, Vann did not quietly enlighten the correspondents. (He estimated in his confidential report to Porter and Harkins that the number of guerrillas slain "did not exceed 90.") While Cao received a hero's laurels, Vann had to watch, seething, unable to let truth tarnish his creation.

Diem was so pleased that he gave Cao an elaborate victory parade in Saigon. Radio Saigon and the controlled newspapers of the capital exulted in "the greatest victory of the war." The parade was held on a Saturday, so that civil servants and their families could be recruited to swell the crowds. Pretty girls in the traditional Vietnamese women's dress—the *ao dai*, a tight-fitting tunic that becomes a split skirt at the waist and unfurls over pantaloons—met Cao and his officers at the edge of the city and bedecked them with garlands of orchids and other flowers. Cao rode into the city to the parade marshalling point standing up in a jeep, waving and saluting right and left, and then marched at the head of his officers and men down one of the main avenues to the former French opera house, where Diem's National Assembly met. Everyone had on combat fatigues, boots, and steel helmets except Cao, who asserted a general's prerogative to call attention to himself and wore the baseball-type field cap then coming into fashion in the United States Army. He carried his fancy swagger stick and had a Colt .45 in a leather holster on his hip. All the captured weapons were displayed to the public on a stage erected in the square in front of the opera house. Scores of medals were awarded to officers and soldiers, and the acting Minister of National Defense pinned a medal for heroism to the 7th Division flag. To climax the day, Cao was driven to the palace and decorated for gallantry by Diem. He was also informed that Diem had in mind promoting him to general and elevating him to command of a corps.

THIS public chicanery made the honesty of Vann's confidential after-action report to Porter and Harkins all the more resonant. By this time, Vann had seen enough of the flaws in the leadership of the Saigon forces (he had noted them individually in previous after-action reports) to begin to understand the dimensions of the problem that confronted the whole advisory mission: to wage a war of infantry combat against a guerrilla enemy with an army that suffered from an institutionalized unwillingness to fight.

Despite his difficulties with Cao, Vann quickly became General Harkins' favorite adviser. The reason was not that Vann's after-action reports grew optimistic. They continued to be written with the same coarse-grained honesty. Whereas the ordinary lieutenant colonel might have shaped events to conform with the success-oriented atmosphere of the Army, Vann made no effort to polish the rough edges. The recurrent theme of his reports was that he and his advisers were getting no closer to solving the long-term problem of turning the ARVN into an army capable of fighting and winning the war against its guerrilla opponent. Harkins did not seem to be disturbed by the bad-news side of Vann's reporting. Rather, he focussed on the stacks of bodies that Vann, in spite of Cao's unwillingness to close with the Vietcong, was piling up because of the shock effect on the guerrillas of the helicopters, the fighter-bombers, and the other technology the United States had brought to bear on the war. The general and his staff had decided that in this war of no fronts the essential measure of progress was the number of Vietcong killed—the "body count," in the jargon of the bureaucracy. "In a war without battle lines, perhaps the best over-all index of progress is that of casualties" was the less macabre explanation offered by the briefing officer at the Saigon headquarters in his standard orientation lecture for newcomers and visitors.

Harkins' press officers encouraged correspondents to visit Vann's detachment and to cover 7th Division operations. Touring congressmen and generals and civilian officials from the Pentagon were invariably flown down to My Tho for a briefing by the Vann-Cao team that was shooting record numbers of guerrillas. As part of his strategy, Vann had coached Cao to the point where he was a model briefer, radiating offensive-mindedness from the lectern in the War Room of his villa. Vann had also had his staff compose colored charts and graphs and produce slides for Cao which were on a par with anything displayed in the Pentagon. While he always gave Cao center stage in these performances, Vann would take the lectern to cap them with a short presentation of his own. He had learned the art of briefing while he was a young major on the staff of Headquarters, United States Army Europe, in Heidelberg, rehearsing until he had mastered the weaving together of gesture, statistic, and personal anecdote to convey dramatic effect and conviction to his audience; long after he left, he was remembered at the Heidelberg headquarters as the best briefer ever to serve there. He invariably impressed his audience in Vietnam. If there was time—but there often was not—Vann would draw the Pentagon general or the civilian official aside or take him over to the sitting room on the second floor of the Seminary for a private and different briefing. Otherwise, he left it to Harkins' headquarters to pass along what he was reporting confidentially. This occasional privilege of privately imparted perspective from Vann did not apply at this stage of the war to congressmen or to journalists.

Cao revelled in the acclaim and the prospect of a general's stars. "I kill fifty Vietcong today," he would announce to reporters arriving at the command post. He was perhaps learning the public-relations game too well. Whenever a particularly large body count had been achieved, Harkins' headquarters or the Presidential palace

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would lay on a special flight to make certain that all of the press, including the Vietnamese from the Saigon newspapers, advertised this evidence of who was winning the war. On one occasion, Horst Faas, a German-born photographer for the Associated Press who was to win the Pulitzer Prize twice during his ten years in Vietnam, arrived earlier than the reporters were expected. He found Cao reconstructing the battlefield. ARVN soldiers were dragging the cadavers of guerrillas into fighting positions and placing captured weapons in front of them. Cao was striding about giving directions with his swagger stick.

Several of Vann's captains were offended when Cao took to wearing a bush hat around the headquarters tent when the fancy struck him. They thought the hat was a bit much, even for Cao. He would rub his hands together when the fighter-bombers were running up an excellent score, and talk about how he had the guerrillas in a trap.

But he would never spring the trap. Each time the moment came, he and Vann would have the same clash they had had at the decisive point in the July 20th operation. The reserve troops would be ready, the helicopters would be fuelled and waiting, and Cao would refuse to block the guerrillas' escape. He stopped giving Vann bizarre explanations like that of July 20th—that a regimental commander did not want to share the "victory." Instead, he began doing what Ziegler called "pulling his general's act." He would listen to Vann for a while, say something about being prudent, listen to Vann a bit more, and then pout and say that he did not want to discuss the subject any further. If Vann continued to press him, he would draw himself up and announce, "You are an adviser. I am the commander. I make the decision." Vann kept his temper, but his staff noticed how difficult it was becoming for him. His face would flush, and his normally harsh nasal voice would get harsher. Back at the Seminary afterward, he would scream out his frustration, cursing Cao with a profanity that bore the fluent vileness of the Norfolk poor-white neighborhood of his youth.

During one argument, he gestured to Faust and the other advisers to walk away to the far side of the command-post tent. Then he grasped Cao by the

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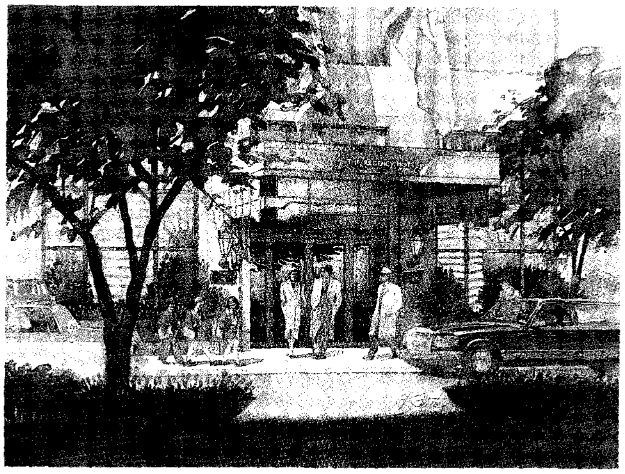

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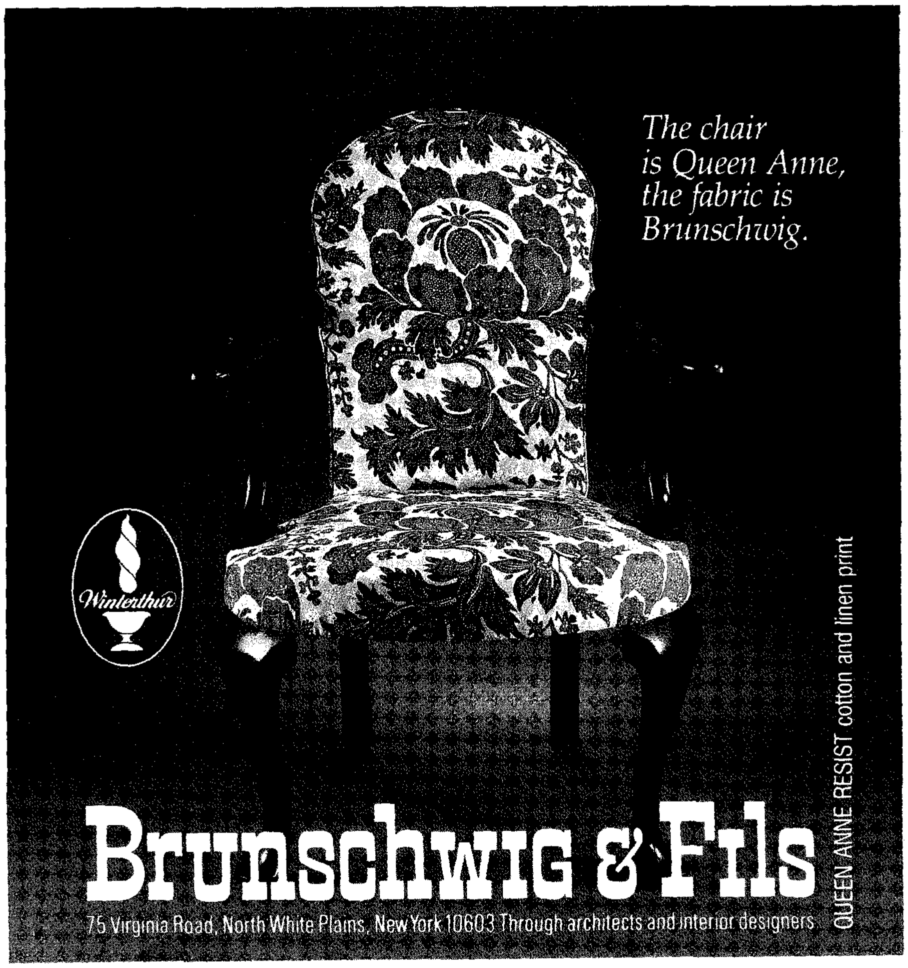
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arm and led him to the map. The staff watched him jab again and again at the opening through which the guerrillas were running. They could hear him tell Cao, in a low voice that tamped down the fury inside him, that Cao had to face up to his moral responsibility as an officer and a soldier. He had to bar the gate and wipe out that Vietcong battalion, so that those guerrillas would not live and learn how to fight better another day and come back and kill his people. Vann's staff waited for Cao to issue the order to load the reserve into the helicopters. Their chief really had his dander up, and this time he was surely going to prevail. Cao did not "pull his general's act" on this occasion. He simply walked out of the tent. Faust started to wonder if Cao might secretly be a Communist agent.

IN September of 1962, with his commitment to the war now nearly a year old, President Kennedy sent General Maxwell Taylor, the new Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to Vietnam for an assessment of how the conflict was going. Vann was one of four advisers whom General Harkins invited to Saigon to have lunch with Taylor and brief him. By this time, Vann's ideas on the conduct of the war were well developed. In addition to his doubts about the ARVN leadership, he was troubled by the resilience that the Vietcong were demonstrating against the battering he was giving them. He had heard from Drummond that some of the battalions they had decimated were already receiving replacements to start rebuilding. Drummond had also discovered that, despite all the guerrillas reported killed in the division zone since the beginning of the year, the total number of Main Force and Regional Vietcong in the five provinces remained unchanged. Those units that Vann had not yet caught up with had increased in size and offset the numerical losses in the ones he had crippled. Worse, Drummond had learned that there were a lot more local—that is, village and hamlet—guerrillas in the region than the ten thousand they had originally estimated. He did not yet know how many more, but the difference was substantial. This meant that the Communists had a much wider manpower base in the Guerrilla Popular Army from which to replace their casualties in the Main Force and Regionals than

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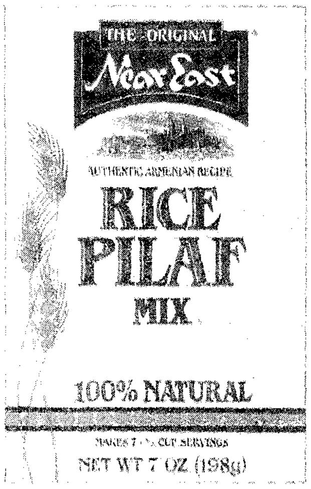

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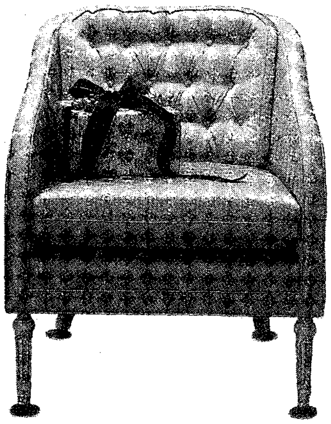

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Vann had believed at the beginning. Vann's gravest, most immediate worry, however, was that although the Vietcong were being killed in unprecedented numbers, the United States was inadvertently removing the basic limit on the expansion of the guerrillas—the availability of captured weapons. Many of the modern weapons that the United States was providing the South Vietnamese forces were being funnelled to the guerrillas when they overran, as they constantly did, the thousands of small outposts in the countryside that the French had built and the Saigon government was seeking to maintain. Vann and his advisers referred to the outposts as "VC supply points," but he had had no success in persuading Cao or the province chiefs to dismantle them.

There was another issue that bothered Vann a great deal. He had heard accounts of abuse of prisoners from some of his battalion advisers and from the American captains and lieutenants working with the Civil Guard and the S.D.C. militia, and he had been disturbed that prisoners reported to have been captured had disappeared before they reached Drummond, at division level. Because of his tendency to doubt what he did not witness himself, Vann had wondered whether these horror stories were the exaggerations of young men who had never seen war before. Then, one night in mid-July, he went out on an ambush in Cai Lay District, about seventeen miles west of My Tho, with a Ranger company commanded by a captain of Cambodian descent named Thuong. Ziegler, who had briefly served as an adviser to Thuong before becoming the detachment's operations officer, went along, too. There was a good possibility of action, because the region was a guerrilla stronghold, and the majority of the peasantry there had sympathized with the Communist cause since the French war. At dawn, a group of seven Vietcong, believing they were in a safe area, came walking right across the dikes of a rice field in front of the company. They were local guerrillas, young farmers in black shirts and work shorts. Thuong waited until they were less than a hundred yards away before giving the order to fire, and then pinned them down and captured them by sending a platoon to circle around behind. Three of the seven were slightly wounded.

Thuong lined up the prisoners, unsheathed his Bowie knife, and began walking back and forth in front of his captives, speaking quietly to them, telling them that he wanted the truth and would not tolerate anyone lying to him, holding the Bowie knife in his hand, flicking the big blade in the air with a snap of his wrist. All of a sudden, his arm shot forward. He snatched a young farmer by the hair, jerked the man's head back, and slashed with the Bowie knife. Then he resumed walking back and forth, talking softly again about telling the truth and not lying, while the guerrilla writhed on the ground, clutching at his throat, kicking away the last spasms of his life. The rest of the prisoners began to tremble. Although Ziegler had warned Vann of Thuong's habits and of his own vain efforts to curb the Cambodian captain, Vann had assumed that Thuong would not dare to murder prisoners in his presence. Until the first throat was slashed, he had thought that Thuong was just threatening them.

"Hey, tell him to cut that shit out!" Vann yelled, so taken aback that he shouted first at Ziegler instead of at Thuong.

"That's his way of interrogating," Ziegler replied, shuddering as Thuong cut another throat.

"God damn you!" Vann screamed, leaping toward Thuong. "I said to cut that shit out!"

While Vann was screaming, Thuong quickly slit a third throat, to show that he was not intimidated, and turned, waved his knife at the four surviving guerrillas, and shouted back into Vann's face, "You want 'em? You take 'em!" He paid no attention as Vann cursed at him. He wiped the blood off the knife onto his pant leg, slid the blade back into the scabbard, and walked away.

One of the four surviving guerrillas had been shot in the leg. A Marine helicopter that Vann summoned to evacuate the prisoners hovered just above the flooded paddy field instead of landing. Because of a problem with spare parts in those early years, pilots tried to avoid the stress on the engine of pulling the wheels out of the muck. Vann picked up the guerrilla with the leg wound, and as he was lifting him into the machine the pilots inadvertently tipped the aircraft sideways, tossing Vann and the Vietcong back into the water. The guerrilla jumped up despite his injured leg, grabbed Vann, shoved him into the machine, and climbed in behind him. His three companions and Ziegler followed.

The episode compelled Vann to conclude that the other stories he had been told were not exaggerations—that torture and murder were a common practice. He instructed his advisers to report to him every instance they witnessed and always to try to stop it.

He confronted Cao with his conclusion, and argued that Cao had to confront the problem and take disciplinary measures to demonstrate to his officers and men that he did not condone what they were doing. A soldier had to learn that he existed to uphold law and order, not to undermine it, Vann said. Torture and wanton killing not only were morally corrupting but corrupted discipline in a military organization. If a commander allowed his officers and men to fall into these vices, some, like Thuong, would pursue them for their own sake, for the perverse pleasure they drew from them. Everyone had to be taught the immense stupidity of such perversions. The three guerrillas Thuong had killed might have been the ones with the most useful information.

Cao agreed that he had to do something, but he took no disciplinary measures against Thuong or anyone else and issued no new instructions on the proper treatment of prisoners. The sole result Vann could discern was that Cao let his officers know he did not wish the Americans to witness these regrettable acts. Some of the units took to committing atrocities when they thought the advisers were not looking. Most, including Thuong and his men, carried on as usual, despite the attempts of the advisers to stop them.

Vann reported this loathsome business to Porter and Harkins, in the hope that Harkins would take action against it at the Saigon level. He planned to keep mention of it to a minimum in the meeting with Taylor. A visiting general would not welcome tidings of torture and murder; there was an understandable tendency to recoil, because of concern about a scandal in the press. Vann intended to save his words for another horror, which troubled him still more, because it was harming a lot more people. This was the indis-

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criminate air and artillery bombardment of peasant hamlets. The bombing and shelling were alienating the population by killing and wounding large numbers of noncombatants and destroying farm homes and livestock.

Vann's ideal of the soldier was as the champion of the weak. A soldier who valued his honor and understood the purpose of his profession did not deliberately kill or wound ordinary people. On at least fifteen occasions during his first year in Vietnam, Vann saw old men, women, and children killed by air and artillery bombardments. On each occasion, their deaths were unnecessary. The random killing and maiming enraged him, not only because it contradicted his ideal but also because it struck him as the worst conceivable way to fight this war. A counter-guerrilla war surely required the strictest possible controls on air and artillery. He wondered how any American could think that Vietnamese peasants would not be as angry as American farmers would have been to lose family members and friends and homes—and these Vietnamese farmers had an alternative army and government asking for their allegiance and offering them revenge.

Vann initially found it difficult to believe the utter lack of discrimination and the capriciousness with which fighter-bombers and artillery were turned loose. A single shot from a sniper was enough to stop a battalion while the captain in charge called for an air strike or an artillery barrage on the hamlet from which the sniper had fired. Vann would argue with the captain—and, later, with Cao—that it was ridiculous to let one sniper halt a whole battalion, and criminal to let the sniper provoke it into smashing a hamlet. Why wasn't a squad sent to maneuver around the sniper and scare him off or kill him while the battalion continued its advance? If a battalion did that, it would lose a soldier to a sniper occasionally, but death was the risk of an infantryman's trade. People hired an army to protect them, not to blow them up.

The province and district chiefs kept their 105-mm. artillery pieces and large 4.2-inch mortars—the equivalent of artillery pieces—positioned so that they could rotate them three hundred and sixty degrees and shoot in any direction. During his first weeks in Vietnam, Vann had stayed late in the command-post tent of another division to work on some notes of the day's events. He was alone with the Vietnamese duty officer and a few enlisted men when a voice came over the radio. After a brief exchange with whoever was calling, the duty officer walked over to the map, checked something on it, and returned to the radio to give a quick reply.

"What's going on?" Vann asked.

"That was the district chief. He wanted to know if we have any troops in this hamlet over here," the duty officer said, pointing to the place on the map. "He says he's got a report from an agent that VC are in the hamlet and he wants to shoot at them."

"What did you tell him?" Vann asked.

"I told him we don't have anybody out there," the duty officer replied.

"But what about the people who live in that hamlet?" Vann asked.

The duty officer shrugged. Several miles away, a howitzer began to sound in the night.

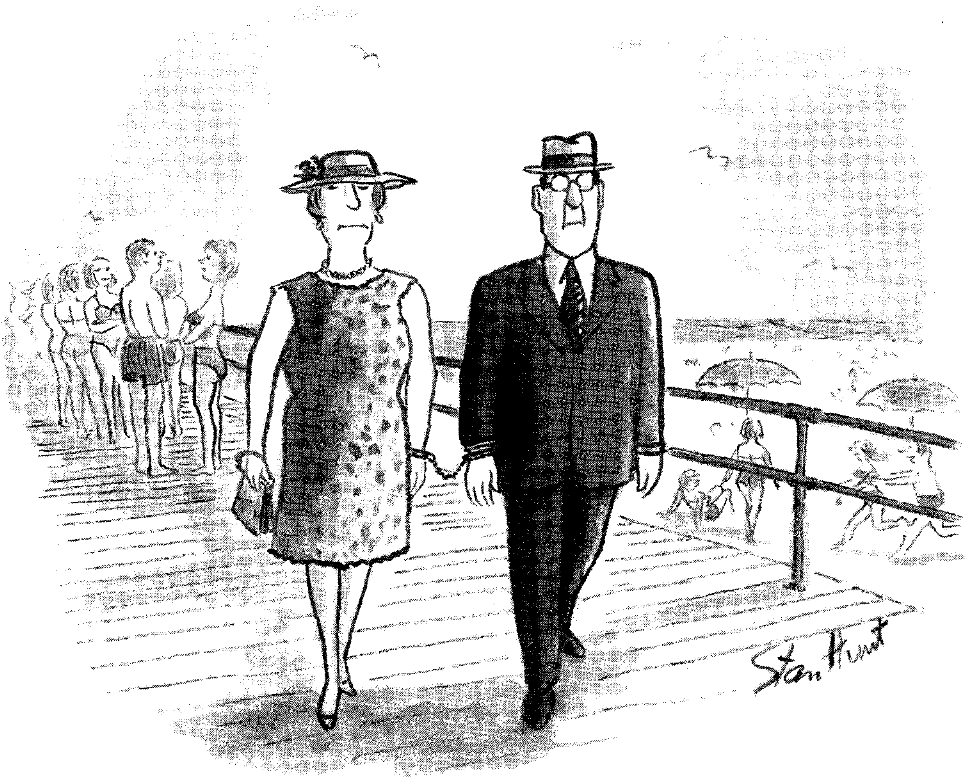
Vann discovered that this practice also held throughout the 7th Division zone. A province or district chief was likely to start tossing artillery shells in any direction at any hour of the day or night at what the Saigon officials casually referred to as "Vietcong hamlets." An unverified report from a clandestine agent that yesterday or the day before some guerrillas had gathered in the hamlet was sufficient excuse to start the shelling. (Vann noticed that such agents, whom the province and district chiefs recruited with their secret funds and paid for each report, did not provoke shellings or air strikes on hamlets where their own families lived.)

Cao and the other officers would assure Vann that the victims were bad people—the families of guerrillas. The battalion commanders whom Vann shouted at for tearing up a hamlet and its inhabitants would lead him over to a tree and show him a Vietcong flag nailed to it, or a propaganda slogan on the wall of a house that was still standing. John Vann had come to Vietnam to wage war on other men, not on their mothers and fathers or their wives and children. That these people were relatives of guerrillas, and undoubtedly did sympathize with the Vietcong and help them, did not in his mind strip them of their noncombatant status and make them fair game. Rather, they were people whom the Saigon government ought to be seeking to win over by fair treatment, so that they would talk their sons and husbands into deserting the Communist ranks.

MAINS HOTEL

Cao and the other Saigon officers, Vann concluded, wanted to kill these people and destroy their homes and slaughter their livestock, not on a systematic basis but often enough to intimidate them. Their theory of pacification, it appeared, was to terrorize the peasants out of supporting the Vietcong. It was for this same reason that Cao and the province and district chiefs did nothing to stop the torture and murder. They thought it useful. Their attitude was "We'll teach these people a lesson. We'll show them how strong and tough we are." The only coherent reply he could ever get out of Cao when they argued about the air strikes and shellings was that the planes and the artillery flaunted the power of the government and made the population respect it. Vann was also puzzled at first about why Cao and most of his Saigon fellow-officers did not feel any guilt over this butchery and sadism. He came to see that they regarded the peasantry as some sort of subspecies. They were not taking human life and destroying human homes; they were exterminating treacherous animals and stamping out their dens.

When Porter and Vann appealed to Harkins to stop this self-defeating slaughter, he turned out to be just as dense in his way as the Saigon commanders were in theirs. He resisted their argument that most of the people in a "Vietcong hamlet" were peasants. He would look at them with disbelief when they explained that the "VC arms factories" the Saigon officers also talked about were usually single houses, in which the guerrillas were fabricating galvanized-pipe shotguns, and indistinguishable from the farmhouses around them. Whether the "arms factory" would be hit by the bombs was a roll of the dice; that ordinary homes would be destroyed was a certainty. Porter and Vann got the impression that the words "Vietcong hamlet" and "VC arms factory" conjured up in Harkins' mind the Second World War images of a German barracks and a munitions plant. Instead of trying to halt the bombardments, the general was furthering them. It had dismayed Vann to watch himself and Porter lose the struggle with Harkins.



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DURING the jeep drive from My Tho to Saigon on the morning of September 11, 1962, Vann mentally rehearsed the way he was going to grasp Taylor's attention at the luncheon table and keep the conversation focussed while he made his points. He was going to be careful not to sound alarmist to Taylor. One did not influence generals by talking like a Cassandra; they concluded that you were unprofessional. Vann could truthfully say to himself that he did not feel alarmist. He was both encouraged and worried, and he intended to convey this balance of hope and apprehension to Taylor. Once Taylor knew the truth, he would tell Kennedy the truth, and once Kennedy understood what was happening in Vietnam he would exert the necessary pressure on Diem, and Taylor would simultaneously exert it on Harkins, and Vann's worries would end. When he walked up the front steps of the commanding general's residence a couple of minutes before 12:30 P.M., he was the same spiffy figure in starched cotton khakis, peaked green cap, and glass-shined shoes who had first reported to Porter that day in March. His invitation was handwritten on a card embossed with a general's flag of four white stars on a field of red.

After the meeting, Vann drove back to My Tho with his worries intact. He explained why in a summary of the luncheon discussion he wrote with a ballpoint pen on his invitation card before he filed it among his papers:

> Opportunity to present views to Gen Taylor as one of four advisors so selected (2 Capt's & 1 Maj & myself). Luncheon lasted 1 hr 15 min. General tenor of conversation such that Gen Harkins presented views and/or overrode key points I tried to present.

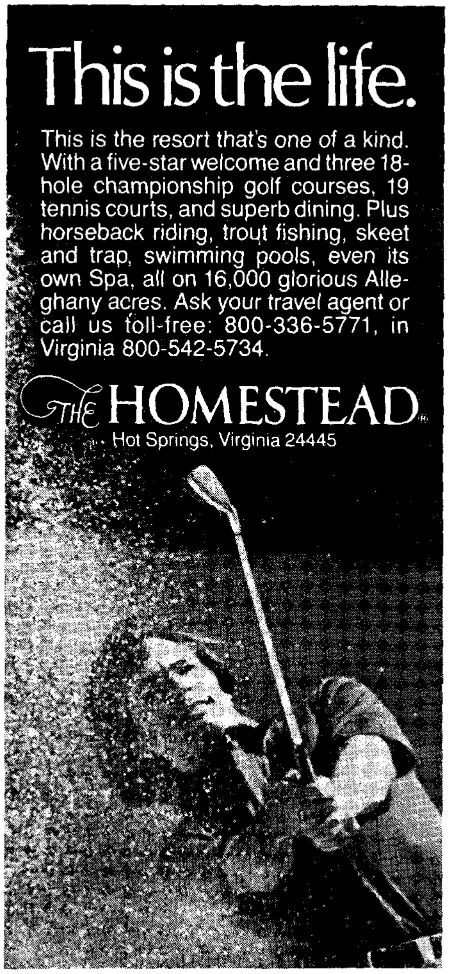
Vann had thought beforehand that Harkins would let him speak honestly to Taylor about the bombing and shelling, even though Harkins had virtually said he considered the issue settled, and about the loss of weapons through the outposts, and about the difficulties that Vann was encountering in trying to make the ARVN fight. His after-action reports had been candid, and even irritating, bordering at times on dissent, yet Harkins had still invited him to the lunch. Vann had schemed to take advantage of the general's good will toward him, but he had not, of course, intended to criticize Harkins personally. He had simply assumed that Harkins felt an obligation to expose the new Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to a range of views, and meant the lunch to be a serious discussion, not one of those "dog-and-pony shows"—as they were called in service parlance—that Vann put on with Cao for guided tours through My Tho.

John Vann had been even more surprised at Taylor, because Taylor had a reputation for having an incisive mind. Taylor had allowed Harkins to pull rank on Vann and monopolize the conversation. He could have handed Vann an opening at any point merely by asking him a question and not letting Harkins interfere with the answer.

Vann had misjudged Harkins' intention in sending him the invitation. He had misjudged the extent of Taylor's curiosity about the details of the war. He had not been invited to the lunch in order to disturb the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff with problems. He had been invited to sit at the table as an animated exhibit for General Taylor of how General Harkins was killing Communists in Vietnam.

THE following month, Vann's ability to kill Communists for General Harkins was curtailed. On October 5th, a forty-man platoon from Captain Thuong's Ranger company was advancing across flooded rice paddies toward a suspicious hamlet in an operation near the edge of the Plain of Reeds west of My Tho when a fusillade crashed out. The Rangers could not see the guerrillas who were shooting them. The Vietcong were firing from foxholes dug amid the shrubbery and trees on top of an irrigation dike that bordered the hamlet. Fourteen of the Rangers were killed and twenty others wounded. Three days later, a Civil Guard company in another province ran into a company of guerrillas and suffered eighteen killed. The Civil Guards gave as good as they took and counted the bodies of eighteen Vietcong afterward.

Colonel Cao suddenly called Vann to his house the next day. He was frightened. He had been summoned by Diem to appear at the palace in the morning and explain the losses in both engagements. Vann had him briefed that night by the advisers to the Rangers and the Civil Guards. He as-



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sumed that Cao would be able to defend himself adequately. The ambush had been the sort of lesson that soldiers have to learn the hard way in war. Cao had done nothing for which Diem could reproach him in the case of the Civil Guards.

Cao told Vann afterward that he never had an opportunity to explain. He arrived in the anteroom outside the President's office before Diem's first appointment. An aide told him to wait. He sat. Others came to see the President and departed. Cao was left to sit. He sat all day. No one offered him lunch. Late in the afternoon, the aide beckoned him into the presence of the man Cao called "my king."

Diem was capable of a discussion when he thought one was to his advantage, but he was famous for his monologues. He used the technique on subordinates who caused him problems and on American officials who might ask him unwelcome questions. He talked for hours, ignoring any attempt by his captives to interrupt, and chain-smoking a local imitation of Gauloises Bleues, a pungent French cigarette. The experience was so painful that his victims nearly always described it to others. On this occasion, Cao got the monologue treatment. He was told that he was listening to his American advisers too much and taking too many risks on offensive operations. These were resulting in too many casualties. If he wanted to be promoted, he would have to show more caution. He was dismissed with no supper.

When Cao returned to My Tho, he put an end to Vann's elaborately contrived system of joint planning. He no longer had any interest in Ziegler's talents or in the folderol of the command briefings he had enjoyed so much. He now planned all operations himself, down to the minor details, and Vann did not see the plans until they had been completed. Cao planned so prudently that during the next fourteen operations, from mid-October through most of December, only three of his soldiers were killed, and the reports indicated that these three died accidentally, from "friendly fire." He put intelligence to a use that Vann and Drummond had not foreseen when they took such pains to develop a professional system for him: he used the information to go where there were no guerrillas. As further insurance, he planned an obvious escape hatch through which any guerrillas who might unexpectedly happen to be in the area could flee. Sandy Faust dubbed it "the gap." There was the question of enemy casualties. Cao dealt with that by inventing even larger kills from airstrikes than he had in the past.

At last, Vann understood why Cao had always refused to commit the reserve to trapping and annihilating a whole battalion of guerrillas. Cao knew that once the guerrillas were trapped they might well attack straight into the reserve, or turn and try to burst through whichever side of the box was nearest to them, in their desperation to escape. There would be fighting at close quarters. A battalion of the best troops the Communists had would die or be captured, because if the reserve buckled under the assault Cao and Vann could always reinforce with more troops, which the Communists could not do. But Cao would also take casualties. If he took casualties, he would get into trouble with Diem; he would not be promoted, and he might even be dismissed. Once the helicopters had terrified the Vietcong, and the fighter-bombers had stacked up a few cords of bodies for him, he had no interest in taking risks. He had a fine score, and that was all he needed to look good. The order telling the reserve not to advance on July 20th had come from Cao, not from the regimental commander. He had instructed the regimental commander to issue it so as to hide its origin from Vann. There had been a logical, if dishonorable, explanation for his baffling attitude, as there was for so many things the Vietnamese did which the Americans thought were the offspring of stupidity, ignorance, or that inscrutable something called "the Oriental mind."

Probing further, Vann discovered that Diem had long since secretly told Cao and his other commanders not to conduct offensive operations that might result in serious casualties, particularly to the regular Army. Vann did not yet know enough about the history of the regime to grasp the specific reasons for this order. The explanation, it eventually turned out, was again not an especially complicated one. Diem and his family believed that casualties suffered on offensive operations against the Vietcong had been a major cause of the abortive coup d'état in November, 1960. The Ngo Dinhs were convinced that the ARVN paratroop officers who had led the attempt had plotted with oppositionist politicians because they were disgruntled over these losses. (Actually, the paratroop officers had concluded, as had the politicians, that the Ngo Dinhs were creating the conditions that caused the Communists to thrive. They had also been disgusted at seeing the lives of their fellow-officers and their troops wasted by men like Cao whom the President and his family had promoted to senior command positions.)

When Vann informed Porter and Harkins of Diem's secret order, and Harkins went to Diem to ask if he had issued it, Diem was prepared for him. He had heard arguments from the Americans before about aggressiveness; it was the American philosophy. Diem had convinced himself that it was a poor approach. He refused to accept the proposition that he had a choice of risking his Army or seeing the Communists win the war. He considered airplanes and artillery more effective instruments than infantry against guerrillas. He was also convinced that he had already started to win the war with a wise strategy that was in accord with his, and his family's, ideas of how to rule the peasantry. He was gaining control over the peasants by herding them into "strategic hamlets"—fortified places, surrounded by barbed-wire fences. Thousands of these were being built in the countryside. The Americans were financing this national pacification program and supplying the barbed wire and other materials. Diem thought that he was separating the peasants from the Communists—drying up the sea in which the guerrilla fish of Mao Zedong's metaphor swam. With the Strategic Hamlet Program well launched, there was no need to seek out infantry battles.

The one area in which Diem and his family had learned new lessons in craftiness was their relationship with the Americans. They did not hesitate to disagree with the Americans if they saw that confrontation was to their advantage, for they had found that the Americans were susceptible to verbal bullying and blackmail. They had also found, however, that frequently the best way to handle the American ambassadors and generals and senior C.I.A. agents was to agree with them,

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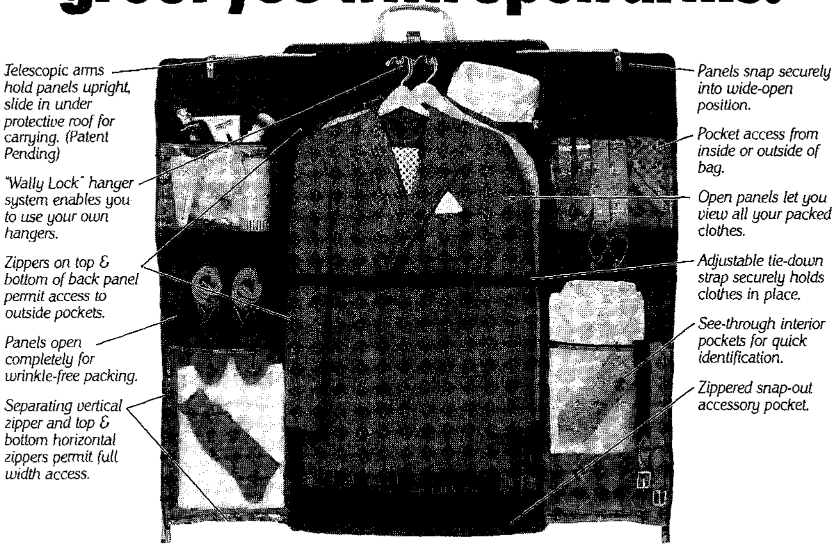
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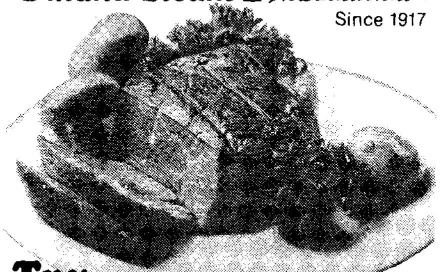

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to tell them what they wanted to hear, even if it was a lie. The Ngo Dinhs had learned that these important Americans would more often than not go away content, report to Washington what they had been told, and not try to determine whether it was the truth.

When Harkins asked Diem if it was true that he had ordered his officers not to take casualities, Diem lied. It certainly was not true, he said; on the contrary, he had lectured the ARVN commanders and his province chiefs on being aggressive. He had ordered them to attack the Vietcong without hesitation wherever they could be found. Harkins did not question Diem further. He began to accept Cao's faked body counts and to pass them on to Washington with no warnings attached. Vann asked Porter for permission to deny Cao the use of American helicopters, in an attempt to put a halt to these farcical operations. Porter told him that Harkins forbade it.

The relationship between the manipulated and the manipulator is a two-way exchange. Vann had thought he was manipulating Cao, but Cao had got his way. Two American Presidents, Eisenhower and Kennedy, had sent men of high reputation to Saigon to manipulate the Ngo Dinhs in the interests of the United States, but the Ngo Dinhs had got their way.

Through November and December, Vann watched the Communist-led guerrillas overrun more outposts, seize more American weapons, and build up their battalions in the northern Mekong Delta. He got nowhere with Cao or Harkins. Diem promoted Cao to general and corps commander, and put him in charge of the entire Mekong Delta. John Vann became a frustrated and angry man.

Vann and his field advisers and Harkins and his headquarters staff still shared one wish common to all American officers in Vietnam. They hoped the guerrillas would one day be foolish enough to abandon their skulking ways and fight fairly in a stand-up battle. The desire was expressed wistfully—as a pipe dream in which lightly armed guerrillas attempted to stand and resist invincible American armored vehicles, artillery, and fighter-bombers. No American officer, Vann included, ever imagined that the Vietcong might do just that.
—NEIL SHEEHAN

(This is the first part of a four-part article.)

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POPULAR MUSIC

Talking Heads '88

ON their new album, "Naked" (Fly/Sire), Talking Heads have expanded their lineup to accommodate greater rhythmic freedom, as they did on 1980's "Remain in Light," but the intentions behind the two records are surprisingly dissimilar. On the earlier record, the band seemed to want to transmute itself into some cockeyed version of a mid-seventies big funk band, complete with rolling, conga-driven beats and a chanting female chorus. As is true of nearly everything the band does, part of the album's force was purely comic—"Ladies and gentlemen, David Byrne, the hardest-working man in show business!"—and the keyed-up African-tinged rhythms that the songs were built upon seemed designed to mimic the cadences of one of Byrne's nervous twitches. "Naked," however, has an airy calm pervading even its most raucous tracks, and, despite the long roll call of guest-star musicians (from the accordion player James Fearnley, of the Pogues, to the guitarist Yves N'Djock), the arrangements are firmly shaped, though we may never have come across such designs before. More than any other music Talking Heads have recorded, the painstakingly fitted-together textures here bespeak the painterly impulses of these former art students.

"Naked" was recorded in Paris, which is rapidly becoming the acknowledged hub of pop internationalism, and it freely incorporates the Caribbean rhythms of zouk, salsa horns, and an array of guitar sounds ranging from Nigerian filigree through pedal-steel glide to rock-and-roll scratching. Such cross-cultural hybrids have come into vogue in the eighties among certain white self-styled rock intellectuals (Sting, Peter Gabriel, Paul Simon), but often their records signify little more than the performers' ability to hire Third World sidemen. Although such projects may be honest attempts to break through the limits of rock rhythm and conventional pop songwriting, the idea of a united world music isn't totally benign, despite the metaphor it provides for social harmony. (Besides, the method of cultural exchange between black and white on these records isn't much changed from the one that kicked off rock and roll in the first place.) Often, the mishmash of accents only dissolves into a pleasant, forgettable groove that veers close to qualifying as the hip Muzak of this dance-obsessed decade.

The settings for the songs on "Naked" have their own knotty integrity, and though much of the music is composed of stray but identifiable shards, it sounds improvised, imagined. When the horn section (jovially arranged by Angel Fernandez, of the salsa star Celia Cruz's band) leaps out of the smooth surface of "Mr. Jones," it pushes the song along with an undeniable kick, yet it retains a bare, sweet hint of camp. The moody plaint "The Democratic Circus" fairly shimmers with the light patter of congas and the wide drawl of the Dobro. And "Cool Water" builds to its peak with an almost classical symmetry, the synthesized flutes and strummed acoustic guitars surging with an elegiac grandeur. Even here, where the textures aren't explicitly African, the music works from the African premise of a musical piece as a concrete, indivisible whole—each player dependent on another yet allowed his own voice.

Byrne and the rest of the band have always been interested in rock as a process—been taken with the idea of a song as a mechanical gizmo of endlessly interchangeable moving parts. Their experimental fervor has pervaded some of their best music: on "Naked," much of the playful trickery that was introduced to the band by its former producer Brian Eno has resurfaced, such as having band members rehearse a song on an instrument other than their usual one or sing nonsense to the prerecorded tracks until the inchoate sounds form words. But if such risks make the band's successes almost magical, they give its shallower moments a lazy yet belabored feel, as on 1986's "True Stories." Recorded as part of the media blitz for the Byrne-directed film, the album's cheesy parodies of garage rock, Tex-Mex, and—surprise—early Talking Heads seemed the work of a dilettante who had nothing to fall back on but his own far-ranging taste. It was as if Byrne thought it would be a cute idea to yield to the secret hack impulse that lurks deep in the heart of every good pop

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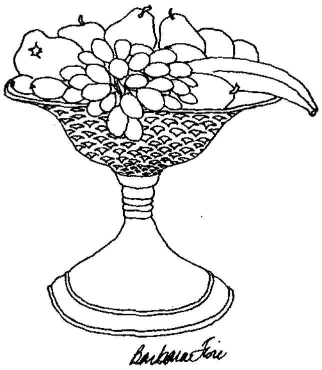
songwriter and then lost interest after knocking off the first song.

On "Naked," the band takes a more workmanlike pleasure in its playing than it has since 1983's "Speaking in Tongues" (itself a compression of "Remain in Light"), and, to match that, Byrne's lyrics have turned a bit denser: they're cut through with loose phrases that interrupt a song's narrator and threaten to supersede him. The mode of speech here is far removed from the clipped, jittery monologues that gave the band's earliest songs such clean, stark shapes. The narratives now slide into adult nursery rhymes ("Ruby Dear"), throw in a ruse without warning (just what does "a polka party for Bob and Martha" have to do with the gently mocking nature celebration "Totally Nude"?), and slip into media clichés (the awful phrase "physical culture," also from "Totally Nude"). Is the title "Ruby Dear" a reference to, of all *things*, Thelonious Monk's "Ruby My Dear"? Who knows? Who cares? And yet the intent of the songs comes through more clearly than you might expect. "Blind" is a fevered report from a war zone; "Mommy Daddy You and I" touchingly follows a family from Baltimore as they move up North; "Cool Water," the big philosophical statement that rounds out the album—and actually works—is about the human expendability that makes a life of drudgery and a life of war possible.

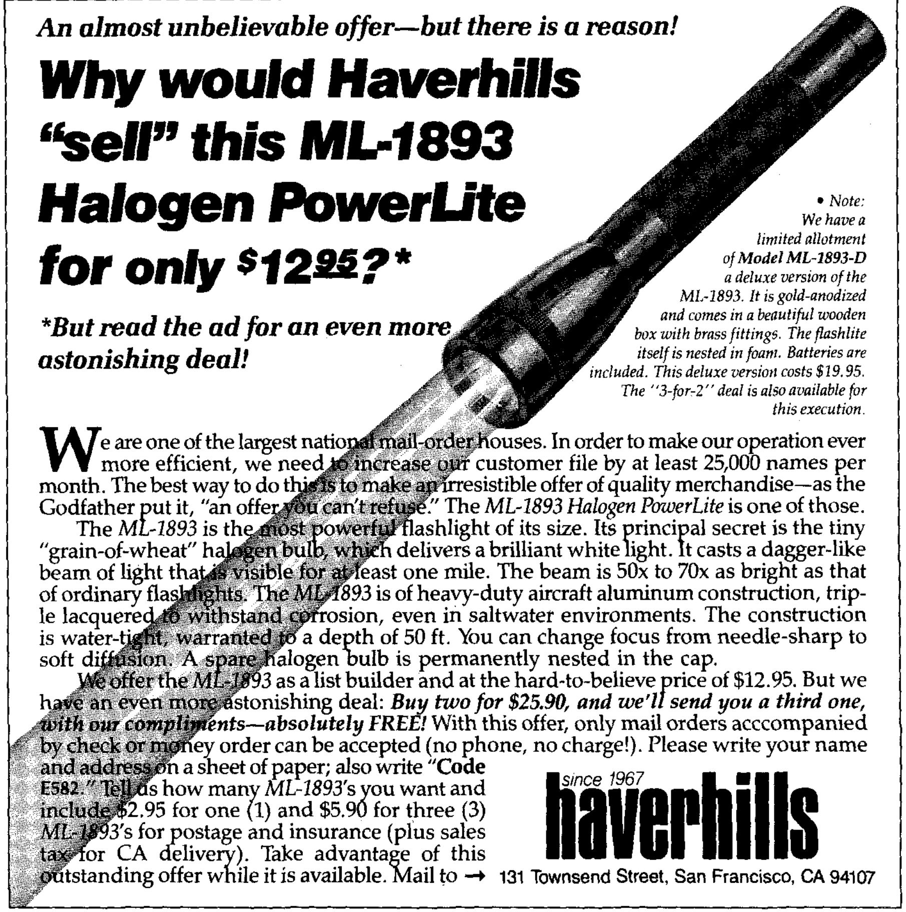


These are fairly large themes for Byrne, and there are moments when he tries to make them sound grander by suggesting they're to be taken as a whole—a hedge, since "Naked" isn't quite a concept record of overlapping subjects. The most obvious instance of this is the recurrence of Byrne's pet water metaphor (which he deployed best in "Once in a Lifetime") in nearly every song; it even pops out of nowhere and takes the shape of a phrase as clumsy as "changing the water of life" in "Mommy Daddy You and I." But the band also returns to a couple of themes it has touched on previously, and improves on them. "Blind," with its sustained paranoid voice and monomaniacally looping guitar, is scary in a way that "Life During Wartime" (from 1979's "Fear of Music") never was. "(Nothing but) Flowers," which envisions, with some disgust, the urban wasteland retransformed into an Edenic vista, is devoid of the nastiness that accompanied 1978's "The Big Country," in which the city slicker Byrne surveys farmlands from an airplane and remarks that he wouldn't live there if you paid him.

Of course, back in 1978 "The Big Country" was something of a groundbreaking statement of purpose for a punk generation that had spurned the soft pastoralism of the late sixties and early seventies for the anti-utopia of fragmented city life. Byrne and the band, not quite punks themselves but surely punk allies, gave the song the heft of an up-to-the-minute expression of taste, much the way their songs rejected rock clichés as a matter of taste. A decade later, the similar message of "(Nothing but) Flowers" means something else entirely, especially when it's heard against the weaving motion of N'Djock's guitar. For longtime rock fans who, like Byrne, see African music as an honorable exit from the bind of rock's conventions, there is once again the temptation to embrace this supposedly innocent music as the soundtrack to an idyllic world. Luckily, the band realizes that this is at best wishful thinking and at worst a simplistic degradation of everything complex and intractable about the music of Nigeria and Zaire and the Caribbean. What the song finally implies is that the grand cross-cultural fusions that so many long for will occur on the dingy level of the everyday—where Johnny Marr's chattering guitar finds its way by swirling around N'Djock's elegant runs, where sometimes the sight of a Pizza Hut is more comforting than a field full of daisies.

The Heads have always needed some kind of accepted pop-audience assumption to work from and to debunk; like so many of their peers, they're most comfortable playing against the Zeitgeist, which is partly why the somewhat smug expressions of domestic contentment on 1985's "Little Creatures" haven't held up too well, especially since they were intensified by the imposed tightness of the music. As part of the art-rock tradition that they would wince at being included in and yet have redefined, the Heads have maintained a sense of an album as a step in a progression that reacts to the band's previous work as well as to the other records of its time, and reacts not just as music but as thought. (It's indicative of our era that art-rockers are now pilfering Third World rhythms and band configurations instead of European classical bombast, as they did in the early seventies.) The band's initial super-straight image and small-scale songs, introduced with short, nervous strokes on "Talking Heads '77" and 1978's "More Songs About Buildings and Food," were meant to be heard against the contrived hipness of the music of the day. Once the band got its own tradition going, the expansive rhythms of "Remain in Light" were meant to be heard against the constricted lockstep of its predecessor "Fear of Music."

For all the intellectual vitality of this approach, there's something severely limiting about the idea of a rock-and-roll career as a series of treatises: something has been lost on the way, and Byrne surely understands this even as he takes the notion and runs with it. Part of the reason the Heads have been the most consistent white rockers of the past decade is that they are barely a band at all but, rather, a conduit for whatever free-floating ideas happen to catch Byrne's fancy. (Byrne's conceptual dominance of the group is the prime reason that Talking Heads are beloved by aging musical commentators who have less use for rock than they once did.) Certainly "Naked" feels like another Byrne project (after all, he wrote all the record's lyrics), but it's no cavalier fluke: the album extends the rhythmic thrust and play of "Remain in Light" and "Speaking in Tongues" into richer, more variegated territory in a series that communicates heartfelt, if sporadic, commitment. (Byrne now seems more ill at ease playing straight rock than fronting one of his big bands.) And, what's just as gratifying, the core quartet of Talking Heads are more than the efficient sidemen they have often appeared to be—the album's fluid mu-



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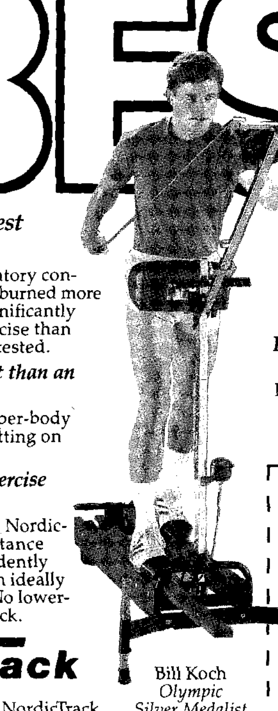

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sic was written by them as a collaborative effort—and the rhythm section of the bassist Tina Weymouth and the drummer Chris Frantz has never played with such delicacy and understated propulsion.

The ideal that is so attractive to white lovers of Third World music is that of a working community where no one is out of place, where invented musical comments interlock as part of the flow of a piece's seemingly pre-set structure. Such egolessness, which can sometimes be only too easily interpreted as salvation, is a risky insistence that individual need is better served in a group than solitarily. And this image (more than nature or water) is what motivates "Naked"—a refutation of the supposedly heroic anomie of the individual which so much American thought takes as a cheap given. The idea (which doesn't remain one, thanks to the vibrant backup) gets its fullest, funniest exposition in the exuberant "Mr. Jones." The song takes off from a gentle slap at rock history: the title *character can be none* other than the Mr. Jones whom Bob Dylan sliced to shreds as a soulless fact collector in 1965's "Ballad of a Thin Man." Despite Dylan's horrifying vocal, the impact of the song has diminished somewhat without the romantic force of the sixties background argument of rationality versus emotion to hear it against; it seems now that Dylan is merely berating Mr. Jones for not being as cool as he is. (Dylan has returned the favor by turning into Mr. Jones over the past ten years anyway.) But the Heads accept Mr. Jones as a kindred oddball and a returning hero: they beckon him with a quizzical affection to dance to the ceaseless salsa horns and rolling rhythms, and marvel at his new clothes and hair style. (Byrne makes a special effort to add a satiric twist to the phrase "rock stars with tambourines," turning them into objects of derision.) The cry of "Mr. Jones is back!" rings with a defiant note of vengeance, heralding the inevitable triumph of the repressed. As with "Slippery People" (from "Speaking in Tongues"), acceptance by a group of strangers takes on the significance of a religious deliverance, not just from the tyranny of one's mind but from plain loneliness. And that may be a more compassionate definition of paradise than anything the sixties ever came up with.

—MARK MOSES

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LETTER FROM MEXICO CITY

JUNE 9

THE San Ángel Cultural Center opened on a chilly Friday afternoon last January with an exhibit by neighborhood artists. Among the offerings were five works by Diego Rivera, one of them an oil portrait of Dolores del Rio; four Rufino Tamayo lithographs, including one of his trademark watermelons; and an ink drawing by José Luis Cuevas of himself and his wife, Bertha. With historic, large high-walled mansions and winding cobblestoned streets, San Ángel, in the southwestern corner of Mexico City, has been home to nearly all the country's most famous artists. (Art is to Mexico what literature is to Ireland.) Rivera, who died in 1957, lived in a modern, boxy blue-and-pink complex, on the Avenida Altavista, that even now, as a museum, seems to poke fun at the formality of many of the other houses in the neighborhood, and perhaps at what goes on inside them. The blue part of the complex is a separate building, in which Rivera's third wife, the painter Frida Kahlo, lived. Tamayo, now eighty-eight and the best known of the Mexican abstract artists, works every day in a studio in his house, which sits behind a low, relatively modest stone wall on the narrow Callejón del Santísimo. Cuevas, who, like Tamayo, rejected the realistic style of the Mexican muralists, is, at fifty-four, still regarded as an enfant terrible. He lives near Tamayo, on the Calle Galeana, but it is said that he is usually in Paris.

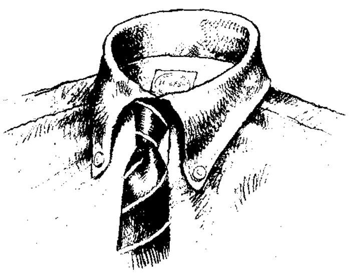
Cuevas was here last January, and he was scheduled to give a speech dedicating the San Ángel Cultural Center. But at the last minute he said he couldn't come. Cuevas has a reputation for being a bit arrogant and egotistical, but this time he wasn't to blame. On the morning of the ceremony, the event was moved ahead two hours to accommodate the President of Mexico, Miguel de la Madrid, who was going to be in the audience. The local politicians frantically considered four replacements, and finally called Marta Villaseñor de Camarena, a neighbor of mine. Marta is a beautiful middle-aged woman with intelligent dark eyes and long black hair, which she wears in a high, sophisticated ponytail. A great-great-uncle of hers was Justo Sierra, a nineteenth-century philosopher and educator, whose picture is on the two-thousand-peso note. Her grandfather Jesús Urueta was a politician and a great speechmaker, who was known as "*el jilguero de la revolución*"—"the songbird of the revolution." Her father was consul-general in New York and Paris, and her mother, who lives next to Marta on what is left of the family homestead in San Ángel, is a well-known playwright, who at one time managed a theatre in the Zona Rosa, Mexico City's fashionable Pink Zone. Years ago, when the family first rented out one of its houses, the tenant was Carlos Fuentes. Recently, Marta told me she felt she had been selected to fill in for Cuevas because she is president of the Residents' Association of San Ángel, and she may have been partially right. This is an influential neighborhood, and Marta, like her ancestors, has a regal position. That afternoon, she intended to use it to get Miguel de la Madrid to do a favor for San Ángel: to protect the neighborhood's best view of its most important monument, the Museo Colonial del Carmen, a seventeenth-century Carmelite monastery.

Marta walked onto the stage of the Cultural Center and looked toward the middle of the balcony, where de la Madrid was sitting. By American standards, the President is a short man, but he sits tall, with his back so stiff and straight that he gives the impression of posing for a sculptor. Marta greeted him, observed that his ancestors might have been among the early gentry of San Ángel, and thanked him for his help in refurbishing the Cultural Center, which had been a government office. Then she hinted, courteously but firmly, that there were still problems in San Ángel, particularly in regard to the monastery. At the conclusion of the opening ceremony, the President summoned Marta to a private meeting.

They met in a second-floor anteroom that had thick wooden doors and a sofa with red upholstery. Marta was nervous. Mexicans, even aristocratic Mexicans, revere authority, and she was about to speak to the man who, at least for the moment (national elections were six months away), was the highest authority in the land, the scion of the political party that had been in power since 1929. With such a party behind him, the President usually does as he pleases. "Señor Presidente," Marta said, "may I show you the monastery from the balcony?"

They stood above the Avenida Revolución, a part of San Ángel that is quite different from that of the mansions a few blocks away. Cars, many without mufflers, most without catalytic converters, sped by, visibly spewing fumes, which have made this, the world's most heavily populated metropolitan

BAGGIER AND BETTER



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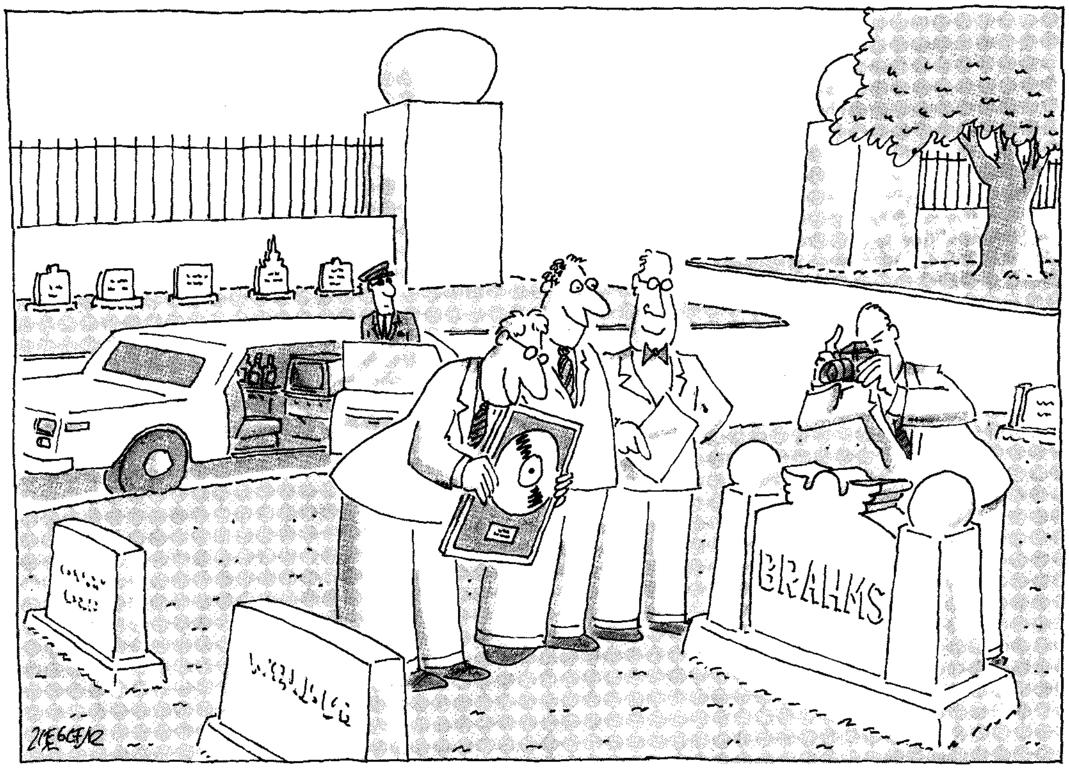
area, also one of the world's most polluted. Marta and the President looked at the front of the monastery, a sturdily graceful building that has three fat, cupola-topped domes, roofed with antique Talavera tiles in different patterns of blue, yellow, orange, and white. Inside are a church, a museum, two floors of offices, apartments for the friars, numerous works of religious art, and, in a basement, the mummified bodies of seventeenth-century San Ángel luminaries. Marta told the President that the monastery, which dates from 1617 and is dedicated to the martyr San Angelo, had once been part of a great religious compound with a circumference of a mile and a half; its orchards were said to number tens of thousands of trees. Today, the Carmen is squeezed between a bank and a building containing a beauty parlor and two sweetshops. Private houses have been built into openings in its stone gate—one of the houses an annoying shade of creamy orange. Another house shares a wall with the monastery. From the balcony, Marta and de la Madrid could not see Avenida Insurgentes, the next street over, onto which the monastery backs, but it is as unattractive as Revolución. On nearby blocks stand a Pizza Hut, a Burger Boy, a Hippoo Burger, and a restaurant called Nasty. There was, however, one plot of vacant land on Insurgentes, where a pedestrian could stop, turn his back to the traffic, close his ears, and pretend to be in a different era as he took in a full, clear view of the Carmen's domes. Now a construction firm was laying the foundation for a three-story office building on that site. "They are going to put the office building wall-to-wall with the monastery, Señor Presidente," Marta said. "It's the most shameful thing I ever heard of. Who could have authorized this?"

De la Madrid did not say a word. They left the balcony and returned to the anteroom. Then, according to Marta, the President approached a group that included two ministers, the mayor, San Ángel's delegate to the government of the Federal District, and a prominent businessman, and said, "*Que se cancelen las licencias y que se congele el uso del suelo en esa manzana!*" ("Cancel the licenses and freeze all the building on the block.") Marta was ecstatic. It was her understanding that the President had just put a stop to all construction on the perimeter of the monastery, including the office building. One of the President's press aides, who was present, later claimed that de la Madrid had said that construction of the building was to be stopped "if it was in agreement with the regulations." But Marta is sure of what she heard. Before the President left, he turned to Marta, who had also told him that the monastery itself needed rehabilitation, and said, "Now, Señora Camarena, make sure you have the people of San Ángel help me out, because you have people here who are very rich."

Marta replied, "Senõr Presidente, not everybody here is rich. Please don't look at me."

RUFINO TAMAYO was eleven years old when he came to the capital. In Oaxaca, his birthplace, he had been an acolyte in the Roman Catholic church. "Mexico City was very beautiful then," he says. "Half of it was colonial and the other half was influenced by the French. The city made me change completely. It made me forget about religion. I forgot about music, also. And that's when I started to make drawings." In the nineteen-sixties, after Tamayo had become an established artist, and had lived for nearly thirty years in New York and Paris, he returned to Mexico City, because he missed the Mexican light. The light was there. But along with it he found a city that was becoming what he describes as a "horrible mixture"—a hodgepodge in which the remaining colonial and French structures stood next to skyscrapers built without any regard for the designs of the past. He says, "It happened because the politicians did not know anything about art."

Today, greater Mexico City has a population of about twenty million, and its air pollution, its traffic, and its horrible mixture of new and old seem to make its residents want to leave. Those few who can afford to do so head on the weekends for second homes in the mountains, or in Cuernavaca, a nearby resort city. Or they fly to the Pacific Coast beaches. Families who are at least lucky enough to own cars jam the Desierto de los Leones, a national park on the outskirts of the city; even the most beat-up jalopies seem to make it there by Sunday afternoons. Those without transportation visit the city parks. There are many parks, and on Sundays they are crowded with families, who use picnic blankets to mark out their boundaries. Mexico City itself is spread out like a giant picnic blanket—a sprawl of what were once small towns now connected by wide avenues and highways, at least sometimes. Not all of the highways are completed or go where they appear to be going. Mexico City is what Los Angeles would be if the city planners had got drunk while they were designing the roads.



POSTHUMOUS PLATINUM

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The center of the city is the Zócalo, an enormous plaza, rivalled in size only by Red Square, in Moscow. The city's cathedral is on the plaza's north side. It is an overwhelming basalt and gray sandstone building, portions of which date back to the sixteenth century. The National Palace is in the plaza. It contains in its grand courtyard Rivera frescoes depicting scenes from Mexican history. The National Pawnshop is also in the square, in an old red brick building, and during the weeks before Christmas it is perhaps the most popular place in town. The downtown area surrounds the Zócalo and includes the Zona Rosa. Tourists who go to the Zona Rosa looking for authentic Mexican food often wind up eating Danish open-faced sandwiches or fettuccine Alfredo. The shops are all expensive, by Mexican standards, and not all of them are what they purport to be. The Banana Republic is not really a Banana Republic but a Mexican imitation. The same is true of the Gucci. Near the Zona Rosa is Polanco, which is a residential neighborhood of luxury apartments, fancy boutiques, and haute-cuisine and ethnic restaurants. To the west is a conglomeration of well-to-do communities called Lomas—Hills. Although Lomas is included within the Federal District, some parts of it have a suburban air, and, with its modern houses and shopping centers, it would look at home in the United States. (In his novel "The Death of Artemio Cruz" Fuentes describes a house in Lomas circa 1955 as "a place barren of all personality, not different from any millionaire's residence.") The city's industrial zones are in the north and, more forgivably, are also, in many parts, barren of personality, with cinder-block buildings sitting behind unadorned walls. During rush hour, the traffic jams here are among the worst in the city.

Like most Latin-American capitals, this is a city of rich and poor. The poor live throughout the city, in their own neighborhoods or in their own territories of better neighborhoods. They occupy tiny apartments, or huts only a few yards back from the highways. Those who are the worst off live in caves in the mountains along roads going out of town. Thousands squat on any vacant land they can find. In Coyoacán, another picturesque southern neighborhood, squatters live on the grounds of a church. In Lomas, they often move from one construction site to another.

When it comes to services, this city is as difficult to live in as New York, but in different ways. In New York, the plumber won't come. In Mexico City, several plumbers arrive at once and work together to fix your toilet. Two days later, it is broken again. The phones break down constantly; the phone company claims that this is because of damage done to the lines during the 1985 earthquake. It can take weeks for a repairman to come—unless he knows the customer, and knows that the sooner he arrives the larger his tip will be. Tips are an institution. The mailman gets a little something for delivering the mail, the garbageman is slipped a thousand-peso note after he picks up the garbage. In San Ángel, as in other affluent communities, the local police precinct, too, is, in a sense, tipped to provide special protection. In the small group of houses where Marta lives, each family may pay as much as eighty-five thousand pesos (around thirty-seven dollars) a month for an auxiliary city policeman who patrols the area. That does not cover his handcuffs, which in Mexico are called *esposas*. (*Esposa* means "wife.") If the officer wants them, he has to furnish his own. "Se-

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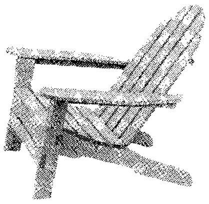

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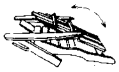

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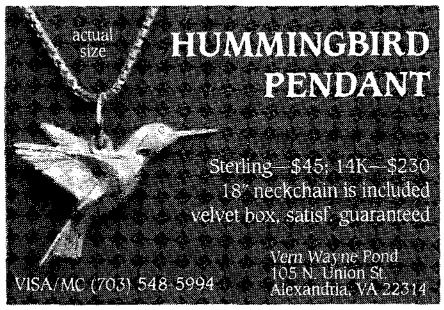

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ñora," our policeman recently asked me, "when you go to New York can you bring me back a pair of American-made *esposas?*"

ON my first visit to San Ángel, the taxi-driver dropped me off at the top of the Plaza San Jacinto, in front of the Bazar Sábado, a Saturday crafts market in a Spanish-colonial building. Out in the plaza, paintings, prints, and sculptures were displayed, some on easels, some on stands, some in front of bushes trimmed to resemble birds and elephants. As I walked toward the residential section, it seemed to me that the air smelled better than it did in the center of the city. The streets were shaded by those high walls, many of them draped in cascades of magenta bougainvillea. Only a few of the gates were open, but behind these one could see the mansions of San Ángel, some of which had been built by the conquistadores. I wound up renting one of the houses belonging to Marta's family. It has three stone fireplaces, a domed brick ceiling, hand-carved doors between the living and dining rooms, and a wrought-iron balcony under a red tile roof. I assumed that it was very old, but in fact it was built in 1968, by an architect who specializes in making new houses that look old.

I began to take walks, and look at the neighborhood. On weekdays, instead of tourists in the Plaza San Jacinto there were usually several chubby prostitutes, but they would hurry away when they heard a long, shrill whistle; it sounded like the traditional policeman's whistle but came from a pimp, to warn his girls that an unsympathetic officer was on the way. Exploring the streets beyond the plaza, including the overdeveloped avenues where the monastery stands, and where the Cultural Center would eventually open, I began to see how Insurgentes, Revolución, and Altavista chop up the neighborhood, making the quiet blocks that remain into threatened oases. I found out that today in San Ángel it can be unhealthy to cross the street—or to breathe. The newspapers informed me that my initial impression of healthy air was romantic nonsense.

San Ángel used to be famous for its fresh air. It was a small country pueblo, a resort town in the same way that Coney Island and Whitestone once were for New Yorkers. In 1841, Frances Calderón de la Barca, the Scottish-born wife of a Spanish diplomat, whose detailed letters about her life in Mexico were made into a highly regarded travel book, described San Ángel as a place in which "all that might be dull in any other climate [was] brightened and made light and gay by the purest atmosphere, and bluest sky, and softest air, that ever blew or shone upon a naughty world."

About three-quarters of a century later, toward the end of the Mexican Revolution, Marta's mother, Margarita Urueta de Wise, was brought to San Ángel by her own mother. Margarita was an infant then, a sickly one, and her mother hoped that a dose of San Ángel air would do her good. But when they had been at their hotel, the elegant San Ángel Inn, for only a few days all the other guests began to pack. That night, Emiliano Zapata and his men took over the hotel and drank until dawn in its garden. Margarita's mother hid with her infant in her room. She was terrified. Her husband, Jesús, who was not with them, had been aligned with a more moderate revolutionary faction, and the Zapatistas had threatened to kill him. Zapata left in the morning, and Margarita became a family heroine: she had not given them away by crying.

Margarita returned to San Ángel as a young woman. In 1934, she and her first husband, Marta's father, bought a large tract of land that had been part of the orchards of the church of San Jacinto—a monastery built, by Dominicans, even before the Carmen. "It was still beautiful," Margarita recalls. "It was earth and flowers and grass, orchards and fields of sunflowers. The only road into town was Insurgentes. It was an avenue, as it is now, but with grass and trees in the middle—beautiful jacaranda trees down the middle, and along the sides, too. When you walked down the middle, you would feel you were in a field of flowers. And there were rivers. We used to have the most beautiful rivers. Do you know the street called Rio Churubusco? It actually was a river—the Rio Churubusco came right through here."

Every Sunday, Margarita's house would be filled with artists and writers—some who lived in San Ángel and some who came for a day's outing. Among the guests were Fuentes, the poet Octavio Paz, and David Alfaro

Siqueiros, Margarita's cousin and neighbor, who with Rivera and José Clemente Orozco made up the triumvirate of supreme Mexican muralists. Margarita was a fair-skinned beauty. Her mother's ancestors, in the Yucatán, were named O'Reilly, and were the children of pirates, Margarita believes. With her delicate features, wide light-brown eyes, and graceful movements, Margarita made a very attractive young hostess. She loved flowers and trees, she was fluent in English and French, and she had a keen wit, which was inherited from her father and showed up as political satire in her plays. A portrait of Margarita painted during those years by Siqueiros hangs in her parlor, and from it she looks out on the world with eyes that, painted even larger than life, seem to notice everything.

It was during the late nineteen-forties that the first signs of change began to appear in San Ángel. In 1947, Diego Rivera was approached by one of his neighbors, Mercedes Tejeda, whose husband, Carlos, was also a painter. "We have to do something," she pleaded. "Have you heard that there is a plan to make little plots instead of selling big pieces of land?"

"You are twenty years too late, my dear," Rivera replied. "It is almost impossible to stop it now, because it is in the hands of men who want to make money."

Margarita says that what was going to become of San Ángel should have been clear to her when, in the nineteen-fifties, Insurgentes was widened and all the lavender-flowering jacaranda trees were chopped down. "Now I think that when they took away Insurgentes like that they took away the town," she says. Around the same time, Revolución was also widened, and in the mid-nineteen-sixties construction was begun on the Periférico, a highway that was supposed to circle the city but never quite did.

In 1934, the land Margarita bought had cost ten pesos a square metre. Over the years, she sold sections of it, and what remains is about a third of the original tract. "It would be impossible to have so much today," Margarita says. "Just because of the taxes. I wouldn't be able to pay them. Also, if you have more land you have to have more servants. Life is different now. I have a big piece of land but not as big as what my mother used to have, or my

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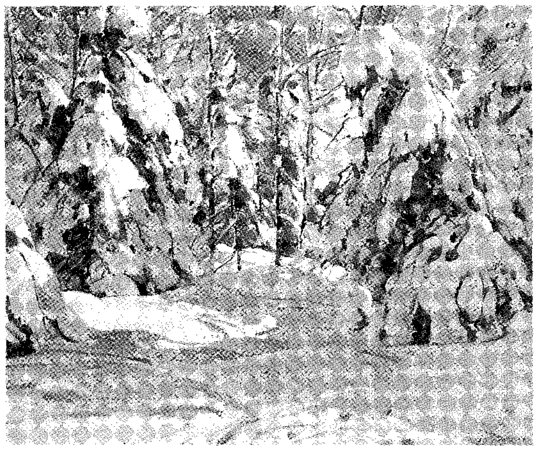

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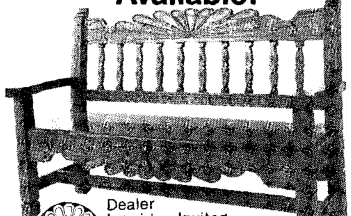

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grandmother. And if you look in my house you'll see that my furniture hasn't been changed in many, many years."

Officially, San Ángel has been included within the limits of Mexico City since the beginning of the century, but for many years after that it continued to be viewed as a separate small town. The transformation of San Ángel and many of the other pueblos around the capital into city neighborhoods has far more to do with unofficial events and with economics—most notably Mexico's postwar prosperity, which was intensified by the oil boom of the nineteen-seventies and then shockingly reduced in the nineteen-eighties when the price of petroleum fell. Since 1976, the peso has been devalued six times. The exchange rate in early 1976 was twelve and a half pesos to the dollar; it is now twenty-two hundred and ninety. The initial prosperity brought roads and buildings, and it also brought thousands of dreamers from the countryside. It seemed then that the city could support such expansion. Today, there is not enough money for maintenance, pollution control, transportation, or any of the other services that such a large metropolitan area needs to run well. Things became even worse after the 1985 earthquake—and not only for those areas that were hit. Because the earthquake did no damage in the southern part of the city, San Ángel and the neighborhoods around it suddenly became very popular places to live. In 1931, the pueblo of San Ángel had thirty-eight hundred people. Today, it is estimated that the Colonia (city colony) de San Ángel, which has spread out in several directions from the original pueblo, has a population of more than two hundred and fifty thousand.

Nowadays, Margarita, just a little unsteady but still beautiful and quick-witted, walks in the garden behind her house and caresses a tree that fell to the ground years ago but managed to live on because one of its branches took root. "I love this tree," she says. "It is my curtain separating me from the neighbors." Her daughter Marta drives a six-year-old Monte Carlo; she says she is very fond of it. Marta's husband, a pediatrician, is a high-level government health administrator, but he still sees patients in the evening. He drives an eight-year-old Caprice. Margarita and her family are not the only people whose way of living has changed. While there is new money in Mexico, economic conditions have wiped out the life that many members of the oligarchy used to know. Throughout San Ángel there are condominiums where there used to be estates. And inside the gates of many of the mansions that do remain Volkswagen Beetles, which are still made in nearby Puebla, have replaced Mercedes-Benzes and large American automobiles. As a child in San Ángel, Marta would run down the road to the Casa Blanca, an estate built by Spanish counts during the conquest, and visit the horses and drink milk fresh from the cows. Now she finds that San Ángel is as sadly overrun as its Carmelite monastery; it is a place where the new and the old have not combined gracefully. In one generation, Marta's position in life has changed. She grew up as a privileged country girl. Now, without having moved, she is a middle-class city dweller fighting the urban problems that surround her.

THE most infamous of Mexico City's problems is air pollution, and it is not unrelated to the country's economic condition. Mexico City has about thirty-five thousand industrial plants, sixty per cent of the nation's total, and they do pollute the air. But it is cars, trucks, and buses that make the problem so severe. There are more than two and a half million vehicles in the city, and because people cannot afford new cars the majority of the vehicles are old and poorly maintained. The fuel situation does not help matters. Only a small amount of unleaded gasoline is sold here, mostly to tourists. In 1986, PEMEX, the national oil company, developed a reduced-lead gasoline, but while it may have helped to reduce lead in the air, it seems to have contributed to another pollution problem—ozone, which at ground level is a gaseous pollutant, not to be confused with the stratosphere's protective ozone layer. Ground-level ozone—commonly known as smog—results when sunlight acts on the hydrocarbons and nitrous oxide emitted by an automobile's exhaust. There is speculation that the reduced-lead gasoline, which may contain a higher level of certain hydrocarbons than Mexico's more common leaded variety, produces ozone when it is used in automobiles without catalytic converters. Catalytic converters process the additional hydrocarbons—and most cars in Mexico City do not have them. By 1990, all new cars made in Mexico will be required to have catalytic converters, but if economic conditions remain unchanged not a lot of new cars will be sold. In addition to ozone and lead, other threatening air pollutants include carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, nitrous oxide, and fecal dust, which makes it dangerous to eat food that is sold on the street. But ozone has been associated with asthma and other respiratory problems in children and old people and is also said to cause tiredness and sore eyes.

One solution would be to limit driving. But Mexicans love to drive. When I first arrived, I asked a rental agent to find me a house in a neighborhood where I could walk to the supermarket. "This is not a city where people walk," she replied. At one point, I thought the pollution could be attributed to the high heels that Mexican women love wearing, for surely those heels must keep them from walking instead of driving. But then I saw a woman in three-inch spikes climbing the steep, centuries-old steps of Teotihuacán's Pyramid of the Sun—and with a baby in her arms. I also had to concede that the majority of the drivers I saw were men. An attempt to encourage commuters to leave their cars home one day a week was a failure, in part because public transportation is wholly inadequate. There are long lines for buses and for collective taxis—usually green vans—called *peseros*. A ride on the metro costs less than an American nickel. But the metro is at least as crowded as the buses. At rush hour, there are so many people riding it that separate cars are reserved for women, to protect them from men with roving hands. Besides, the metro does not go into many of the richer suburbs, where most of the residents own cars and, naturally, use them to travel into the city. Car pools are virtually nonexistent, perhaps because the city is so spread out.

The man-made pollution problems here are compounded by a combination of geographical and meteorological bad luck. The city, with an altitude of more than one and a third miles, is shaped like a bowl and ringed by mountains, so it's difficult for pollutants to escape into the atmosphere. In

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winter, when the morning and evening temperatures can drop below forty degrees, the situation is even worse, because then the air in the bowl is too cold to rise. Winter winds are weak, and do not provide much help. Oddly, the winter sun is very strong, and even more ozone is produced than usual. During the winter of 1987, hundreds of migratory birds were found dead on the streets; one explanation was that the air had killed them. In January, the Minister of Education ordered that all schools open two hours later than usual for the winter, so that students wouldn't have to travel during rush hour. From around the city came reports that mothers were dropping their children off at locked school buildings at the usual time anyway, because they had to go to work. It was a conflict between the interests of business and those of the environment—a common one in Mexico, as Marta learned when she tried to improve the air in San Ángel.

MARTA's four children are grown, and she could lead a quiet life behind the high walls of her house, where she would rarely have to face the city's problems. She has a large garden, and alongside it is an art studio in which she bakes enamel pictures in a kiln and works on watercolors. Now she paints only one day a week, because her volunteer job as head of the Residents' Association keeps her so busy. But, while Marta works hard, she does not fool herself into believing that she can succeed where the nation's growing class of technocrats have failed, so she concentrates on smaller solutions. In between her efforts on behalf of the monastery, she persuaded a builder not to chop down an avocado tree he thought was in the way of his new condominiums.

The ozone, which is San Ángel's worst pollution problem, is not manufactured here but brought by winds that travel from the northern part of the city. Wind patterns, as Marta knows very well, are beyond her control. But she had an idea that if she could get rid of the scores of buses and *peseros* that stopped every day in the Plaza San Jacinto then at least in that pretty neighborhood hub there would be less lead and less carbon monoxide in the air, and maybe, as a bonus, the prostitutes wouldn't have quite so many customers. At a meeting of neighborhood associations, Marta cornered the city's transportation manager. He invited her for a coffee, and over a plate of enchiladas she convinced him. The bus stop was moved a few blocks away, to a spot on Revolución, and the buses and *peseros* were rerouted, so that instead of going both ways on a narrow street alongside the plaza they went up that street and down one in the neighboring community of Tizapán. In the small enclave of houses where Marta lives, which is only a block and a half from the plaza, the neighbors were thrilled. But in the plaza itself several of the merchants were wondering what Marta had against them. The buses and *peseros*, they told her, had brought them business.

The Baños Colonial is a bathhouse in a stone building at the foot of the plaza. For three thousand pesos (about a dollar-thirty), a customer can sit in a sauna for an hour and a half and take a shower; towels are provided free. Hour-and-a-half steam baths are twenty-two hundred pesos. Showers are eighteen hundred pesos and you have to be out in an hour. Most of the customers come for the showers. They are working people who live not in San Ángel but on the city's outskirts. Many of them do not have bathrooms at home. At the end of the day, they wait in line to buy their tickets to the baths—men with dirty hands who are carrying clean clothes in plastic bags, maids with long graying hair and work smocks. On Friday and Saturday afternoons, the mood is festive. Husbands and wives and sweethearts, many of whom work in different homes and do not see each other during the week, come to clean up for the weekend and for each other. Sometimes, for the sake of romance, they'll splurge and share a steam bath. But rarely a sauna: at an extra eight hundred pesos, that would be too much. José María Costal Justo, a twenty-three-year-old businessman, who until recently ran the baths, says that the customers used to get off the buses just to come there. Now a lot of them stay on and wait for a stop that is closer to another bathhouse. He agrees that economic conditions have hurt the business. But the rerouting of the buses has made the situation even worse. "It's funny," he says, "but since the buses stopped coming the only area where business is still one hundred per cent of what it used to be is the saunas. The people who come for the saunas are people with cars and money, people from the neighborhood."

The Farmacia San Ángel occupies a small, dusty booth next to the baths. The fallen oligarchs of San Ángel go to a distributor around the corner, who buys in bulk and sells for less. Carolina Zapata, the owner of the *farmacia*, says that a lot of her business came from people who were changing buses in the plaza. Like Marta, Carolina, who is forty-two, has lived in San Ángel since she was a child, but first in a small house and now in a three-bedroom apartment with her parents. "They say that Marta Camarena didn't like all the people who got off the buses, and she wants to make this into a private little pueblo," Carolina says. "But she can't do that. It's impossible. Here everybody lives with everybody else." Both Carolina and José have complained to the city—to officials of the government of the Federal District—but they don't expect it to do any good. One of the changes the Mexican Revolution did not accomplish was to limit the special access that the upper class has to power. Carolina remains bitter. José has comforted himself with an irony: "They say they moved the buses to get rid of the pollution. So they got rid of it here and moved it over there. What's the difference?"

The difference was clear to a group of neighbors in Tizapán, where the rerouted buses were now going down a residential street they had never travelled before. The people in Tizapán are poorer than those in San Ángel. Tizapán used to be a mill town, and was also home to many of the servants who worked in San Ángel. Now the residents of Tizapán saw a class battle. They drew caricatures of Marta on their walls and wrote anti-San Ángel graffiti: "*Cultura en San Ángel,*

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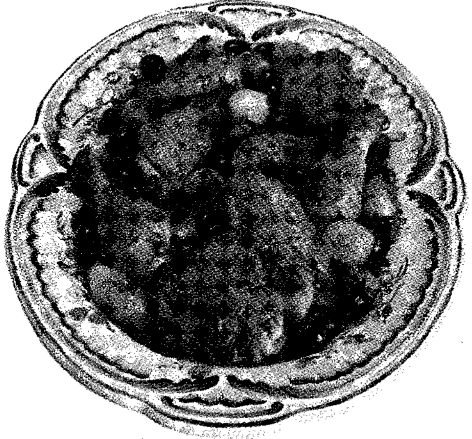

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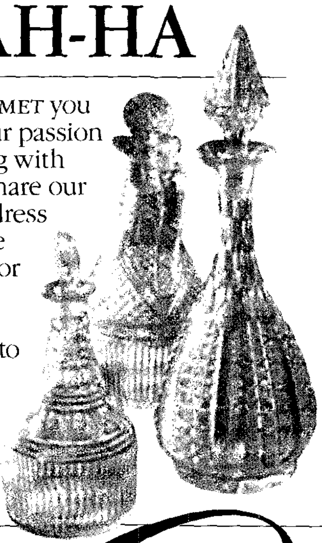

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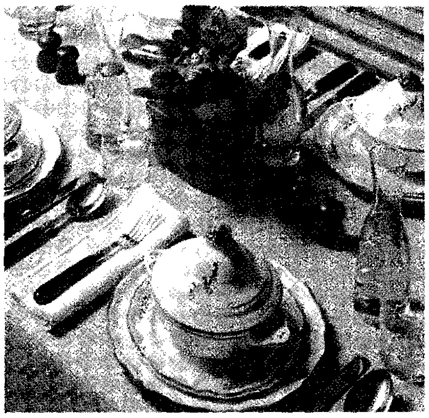

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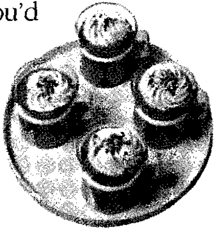

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Locura en Tizapán" ("Culture in San Ángel, Craziness in Tizapán"). They thought that the buses had been rerouted so that cars could get to the new Cultural Center more easily. Like José and Carolina, the residents of Tizapán complained to the city. They said that the new bus route was causing noise pollution on their streets.

When I spoke about the buses to Homero Aridjis, a poet and novelist, and a former ambassador, who has organized a number of intellectuals, including Margarita, into an environmental-advocacy group, he said, "It's such a complex city that you can't make everyone happy. It's like pulling threads. You touch interests whatever you do." Moving Mexico City's pollution and traffic from one place to another—instead of taking up the harder task of finding a solution—is far from uncommon. Aridjis, who lives in Lomas, woke up one morning and found a traffic jam on his street, which was ordinarily a quiet one. A man who lived on a nearby street had prevailed upon the city to make it one-way, because it had too much traffic. Aridjis flexed his muscles as one of the city's leading writers. He and his neighbors complained, and within six months the traffic was sent back to the other street. That reminded me of a story I'd been told by a friend who has lived here for twenty years. She used to have a house on a hillside, and the people who lived at the top of the hill would throw their garbage down. When she asked them to stop, they apologized and began throwing their trash down the other side, so that it landed on the grounds of another neighbor's house.

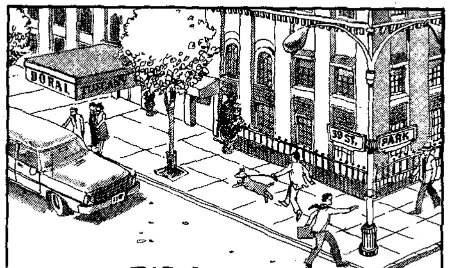
"You know Brad Cullins, of course, and this is Loretta. Loretta is your opposite number at Brad's house."

• •

ONE morning late last January when all the newspapers were talking about the bad winter air, I glanced out of my bedroom window and saw the sky looking thicker and grayer than usual. On relatively clear days, I had been able to see the snowy tops of Popocatépetl and Iztaccíhuatl, volcanoes about fifty miles to the east, and trees on the top of Ajusco, a mountain about seven miles to the south. But now it was as though none of those mountains existed; even the colored tiles of a Juan O'Gorman mosaic on a wall of the main library of the Autonomous National University of Mexico, a fifteen-minute walk away, were invisible. In the Plaza San Jacinto that morning, all the people were covered, too. A group of women in wool ponchos were walking their children to school. The children all wore ski caps with pompoms on top and holes for their noses and eyes, so they were protected from the cold, if not from the pollution. Later, the sky seemed to clear a little. But that night I dreamed there was a piece of black plastic hanging between the roof of my house and the sky, and I tried to punch a hole in it but couldn't. A week later, on February 3rd, several of the twenty-five stations that measure the quality of air in Mexico City registered the highest ozone levels ever recorded here.

The stations were all in my southwestern section of the city, and in the next morning's newspapers that section was given an air-pollution rating of two hundred and ninety—just eleven points under "dangerous"—with ozone listed as the principal contaminant. The Secretariat of Ecology and Urban Development, known as SEDUE, ordered temporary emergency measures to be put into effect. For several days, scores of factories, including about two hundred in the northwest, cut their activities in half. Some ten thousand government vehicles were taken off the road.

In February, I paid a visit to the air-monitoring station for my part of the southwest. It is at the John F. Kennedy Primary School in Pedregal, a neighborhood named for a thick sheet of black volcanic rock upon which it is built. The station, an unmanned white tin hut, sits like a robotic intruder in the school garden, amid palm, willow, and flame-of-the-forest trees and clumps of pedregal. A machine on top of the hut sucks in air, and the air is passed through tubes to American-made metal boxes resembling stereo components—monitors that measure various pollutants. The data are transmitted to a central station, which computes a daily average. The level of the pollutant with the highest average is then reported, and that figure is published in pollution charts in the city's newspapers. It presents the worst part of the picture, of course, but not all of it. For instance, on the day that the local ozone level was measured at two hundred and ninety the carbon-monoxide level might have been two hundred and eighty-nine but I would never have known it. Juan López Morales, a SEDUE engineer who drove out to the station to meet me, explained that each of the twenty-five stations has been



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erected on public land at a site where it can catch the worst air for the area it is monitoring. At least, I thought, groping for some comfort, the station had not been put in San Ángel. In front of us, children were lining up to go home, their uniforms creased, mussed, and stained from a day of schooling. I asked the engineer if what he was saying meant that those children breathed particularly bad air while they were at school. "Unfortunately, yes," he replied. "But not all day long. It's the winds that bring in the bad air, and they don't come all day long. I really can't tell you how long they do come, because, with winds, who knows?" The engineer said that six of the other stations are also at schools, including two kindergartens, and ten more are at public-health centers.

FOR many people in Mexico City, the quality of the air, the density of the traffic, the deterioration of historic monuments, and the decline of the upper classes are among the least of life's problems. In or near almost every neighborhood, there are communities of *paracaidistas* (parachutists)—people who squat on vacant land in huts made of cardboard, plastic, or, if they are lucky, sheets of steel. Some have neither water nor electricity. Others share a communal spigot and plug radios into electric lines precariously hooked up to poles on the road. Across the Periférico from San Ángel, on a hill in the Colonia Las Aguilas, which is another well-to-do neighborhood, the *paracaidistas* have moved in. There flies rest on the children's arms and legs, and the children do not seem to care. Lourdes Aguilar de Aguirre, an elderly woman who lives in a large house in Las Aguilas, is a regular visitor to the *paracaidistas*, and often brings them gifts of food, clothing, and toys, donated by her friends. She keeps a list of recipients, so that no one will be slighted—or claim to have been. Lourdes recently took me to see one of her first friends among the *paracaidistas*, Martha Alicia Chavez López, who has seven children, the oldest eight, the youngest four months. Martha, her husband, and the children live in a one-room shack made of sheets of cardboard that have been coated with tar. They share four cots. Outside, there is a coal stove, the width of a large book. Martha uses it to cook meals, most of which come from cans, and to boil water, which she mixes with store-bought powder to make formula for her baby. Martha met us at the opening to her shack. She was wearing a pink dress with oversized sleeves, from which her skinny arms poked out. She was carrying her baby, a little girl with thick black hair and skinny arms to match her mother's. The baby wore a piece of an old flannel pajama for a diaper.

I asked Martha the baby's name.

"She doesn't have one yet, Señora," Martha said. Then she turned to Lourdes and began to cry. "The baby is very sick, and she may have to go to the hospital," she said. "I am thinking of giving her away. Do you know how I can sell her?"

"If you do that, you will regret it for the rest of your life," Lourdes replied. Before she left, she asked Martha's husband, Antonio, who sometimes works as a waiter, why he was home. He shrugged.

According to Lourdes, Martha and her family have been poor for generations. Mexico's economic boom missed them, and the current economic situation has made their lives even more difficult. In the shack they used to live in, the roof leaked badly. Lourdes gave them three hundred thousand pesos to secure the one they now have. The family who had been living in it were moving to an apartment building—the father had found work as a janitor—but they refused to leave until they were paid. Martha, thanks to Lourdes, made the best offer. "When you meet my husband, please don't talk about any of this in front of him," Lourdes said to me. "He doesn't like what I'm doing. He thinks there are so many poor people here that I'll try to help them all and I'll never be able to do it."

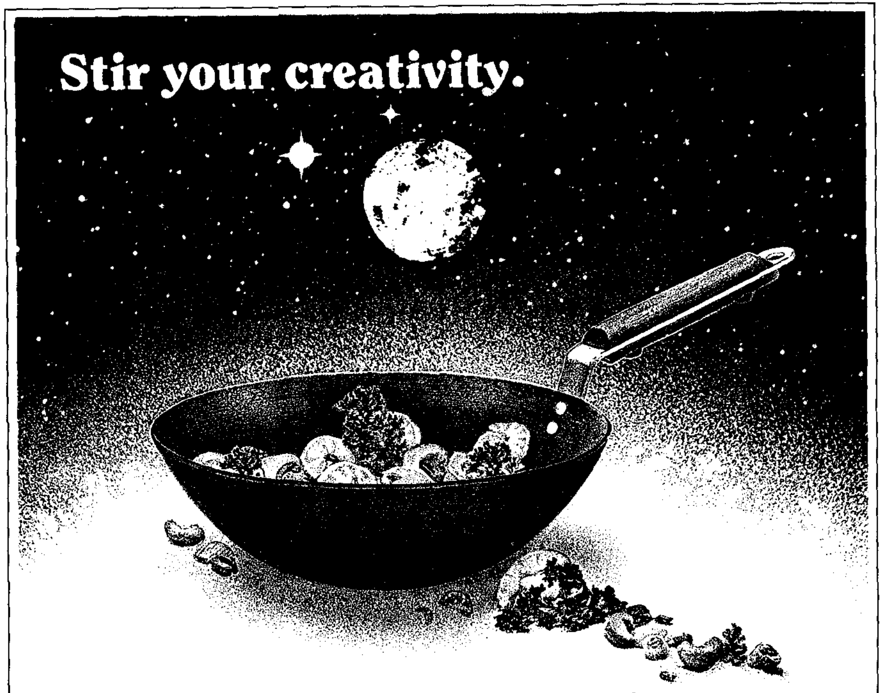
"THIS country is wasting an awful lot of money pretending to be a democracy," a friend of mine said recently. He was speaking about the Presidential elections that will be held July 6th. Last October, de la Madrid, who must leave office, because a Mexican President is permitted to serve only one six-year term, selected a then thirty-nine-year-old career bureaucrat named Carlos Salinas de Gortari to be the candidate of the Institutional Revolutionary Party, whereupon it became a foregone conclusion that Salinas will be the next President of Mexico. The

PRI, as the Party is called, has held on since 1929 by combining smart organizational politics and a selective granting of favors with strong-arm tactics and considerable election fraud. It has never lost a Presidential election.

This time, in part because economic conditions are so bad, the opposition from both the left and the right is more threatening than it has been. A PRI defeat is still considered remote, but the Party isn't taking any chances, and has embarked on a great effort to make the election at least appear democratic. For the first time, the PRI, instead of engaging in secret deals, announced the names of contenders for the Presidential nomination. People here whom I spoke to about this said they appreciated the gesture but still believed that Salinas had been the President's choice right along, for he is exactly the type de la Madrid has favored—young and foreign-educated. Salinas has both a master's degree and a doctorate in political economy from Harvard. Soon after de la Madrid was elected, in 1982, he appointed Salinas to perhaps the most important ministerial post in a country with economic problems—Secretary of Programming and Budget. It was the post that de la Madrid had held before he was elected President.

Since his nomination, Salinas has told two gatherings of local politicians that he will not tolerate dishonesty at the polls. Throughout the country, on walls, billboards, and even rocks, the PRI has painted, in bright red, green, and white—its official colors—variations on a simple slogan that is supposed to emphasize the Party's dedication to government by consensus. "Let the Adults Speak. Let the Children Speak," say the signs. "Let the Women Speak. Let the Students Speak."

Salinas, during his tenure as Secretary of Programming and Budget, devised a plan he says will cure the country's troubled economy. His strategy, which is still unproved, has been to impose short-term suffering, which includes wage and price freezes, in exchange for what he predicts will be more comfortable days to follow. By the time the reviews are in, Salinas will be well into his Presidency—if, perhaps, not with the mandate that his predecessors enjoyed. In 1976, the PRI's choice, Juan López Portillo, ran as the only official candidate and re-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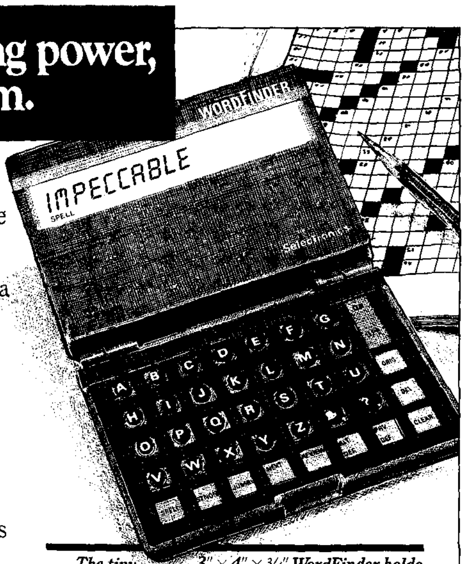

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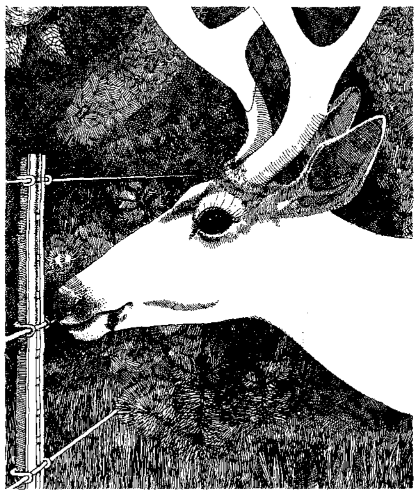

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ceived over ninety-four per cent of the vote; de la Madrid, in 1982, received seventy-four per cent. Political observers here say that, given the strength of the opposition, fifty-five to sixty per cent of the vote would be a respectable showing for Salinas, although it is considered likely that he will get only fifty per cent. How legitimate the results will be is also in question. It is said that a number of local PRI politicians are annoyed by Salinas's call for clean elections. They are afraid that without a little persuasion at the polls their own local machines will crumble.

In Chalco, a modest community just outside the city, where the family of a woman who works for me lives, in a cinder-block hut, PRI campaign slogans have been painted on the wall along the highway to Puebla. She says that behind the wall are unpaved roads and homemade drainage systems. Last September 15th, on the eve of Mexico's Independence Day, she and her family went, as they do every year, to the Zócalo to cheer the President as he gave the traditional speech. They feel they are on very familiar terms with the President. Because he is short, they refer to him as Mickey—for Mickey Mouse. They do not expect anything of him, and they say they feel the same way about Salinas. When they mention Salinas, they giggle a little. He is an unassuming man, thin and partly bald, with a mustache. Even in his campaign pictures he appears delicate. They say they find it odd that he is about to become their new national symbol, and then they shrug. The choice, they understand, was never theirs to make. In San Ángel, the attitude is different. That community has been a bastion of the National Action Party, or PAN, which is the major right-wing party. Marta told me she had felt sure that de la Madrid would listen to her pleas about the Carmen because it is an election year and San Ángel's PAN voters are troublesome to the PRI.

Meanwhile, de la Madrid is getting ready for retirement. It is a Mexican tradition that past Presidents live well. A couple of years ago, people were talking about a television show hosted by a prominent commentator on which a call was taken from an aging Mexican movie star who complained that she had been about to buy a château in France but had been informed that she had been outbid by the wife of the President of her country. Such stories are difficult to confirm, but people tend to believe them.

As the winter progressed, the buses generally continued to stay out of the Plaza San Jacinto. With the *peseros*, the situation was different. A traffic officer had been assigned to enforce the rerouting, but several of the *pesero* drivers had found that if they slipped him a thousand pesos he would let them pass. After a while, the officer was no longer there, and all the *peseros* went through, but without the buses the air did seem better. Marta's other project—stopping construction of the office building behind the monastery—was not going as well. By mid-March, more than two months after she spoke to President de la Madrid, workers were still on the site and had begun to mix concrete for the upper basement level. Marta remained confident.

On April 7th, all work on the building was halted. Ricardo González, an engineer for the construction company involved, told me that it had taken him three and a half years to get the licenses he needed. "We didn't bribe anyone," he said, explaining that he does not indulge in such practices, although they are commonplace. "That's why it took so long." In the course of applying for his licenses, he asked city officials if he needed special permission, since he was building so close to the monastery. He was told that he did not. He also submitted his design to the National Institute of Anthropology and History. He had envisioned a modern building, with lots of glass, but the institute told him that his design did not mesh with the colonial motif of San Ángel, and he revised it, not once but four times, so that it included more cement. In January of 1987, González began to rent out office space, and prepared to build. About a year later, after Marta spoke with the President, he received calls from various government offices asking if he wanted to sell his building. He was told that a fund was being set up to buy buildings around the Carmen, as part of an attempt to restore some of its original splendor. González said he could not sell, because he had already rented the building. A few months after that, he was told to stop all work.

Later this spring, I spoke with Jorge Contreras Alatorre, San Ángel's delegate to the government of the Federal

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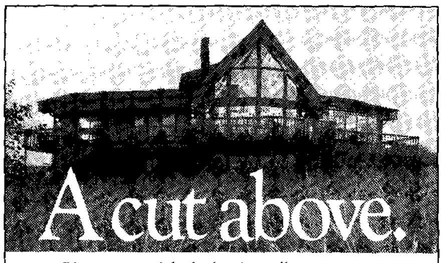

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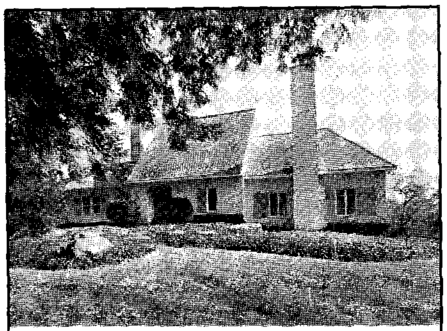

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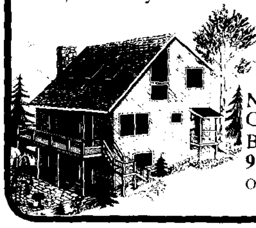

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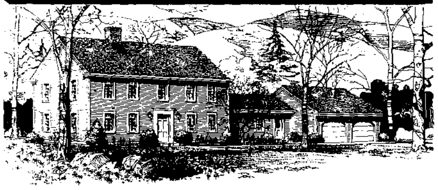

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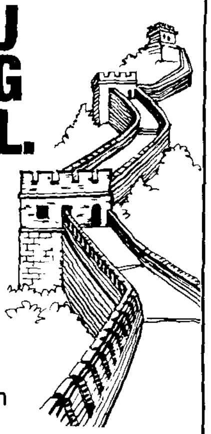
District. He said that the National Institute of Anthropology and History had not done anything wrong in granting González his licenses, since the land is in a commercial zone. But, he added, "government has a responsibility to preserve our national treasures." He went on to say that the Federal District was talking to González's company about the possibility of putting a belowground restaurant at the site, instead of an office building, with a park above, so that the view of the domes would not be blocked; he also said there was still a possibility that the Federal District would buy the land. A few days earlier, González had told me that his company had no interest in building a restaurant. He said he was hoping that the Federal District would offer a good price for the land—perhaps to avoid any controversy so close to a relatively difficult election. He was still concerned that something might go wrong. And he wondered how the Federal District would justify buying the land during such hard times.

THIS winter, on the Callejón del Santísimo, Rufino Tamayo was at work on a new painting. On one side he had painted a green figure that appeared to be a woman. The figure was angular and was being preyed on from below by a doglike apparition and from above by a bird that looked like a vulture. Tamayo said he was depicting the way humanity is now being attacked: "The animals are red for aggression. The human being is green for fear." Homero Aridjis's latest poem, "Poema Histórico de la Ciudad de México," is about a love affair set against a despairing backdrop of crowds, cars, smog, and invisible mountains. On the Avenida Revolución, just a block away from the monastery, the woman who runs San Ángel's local photographic studio is in a constant state of rage. All day, she sits at the door of her storefront listening to the traffic and breathing its fumes. "Let me tell you, we pay taxes," she says. "Lots of taxes. Why can't they use our taxes to solve this? I've been here for twenty-nine years. It was always a large street, but it never used to be like this. I don't smoke, but I might as well be smoking right now. By the end of the day, my eyes are watering. How am I supposed to smile at customers? I don't understand why I haven't gone crazy."

—Barbara Fischkin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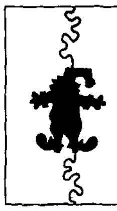
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THE THEATRE

Mute Pretensions

CAN a good performance justify a bad play? Can a bad play be redeemed by a superb production? These were the questions raised by "Zero Positive," a new play by Harry Kondoleon that opened at the Public Theatre on June 1st and closed within the week, after twenty-five previews and seven performances. Not that Kenneth Elliott's production was superb, exactly—merely better than the play deserved—but the level of the acting and the quality of his direction were so consistently high that they commanded attention in a way that the play itself never did. "Zero Positive" purported to be about AIDS: the title is a pun on "sero-positive," the medical designation for the presence of HIV antibodies in the blood. To "test sero-positive" is to discover not that one has AIDS or will necessarily get AIDS but simply that one has been exposed to the virus. Nevertheless, when the hero of Kondoleon's play, Himmer Blank (David Pierce), and his friend Samantha (Frances Conroy) find out that they have tested sero-positive, they unaccountably pull up stakes and check into a hospital.

The subject of AIDS is only incidental to Kondoleon's play; the actual plot concerns Himmer's desire to stage a production of his dead mother's play, a work of juvenilia entitled "The Ruins of Athens." First, Himmer calls his old friend Patrick (Tony Shalhoub), a frustrated actor, who he hopes will be able to put him in touch with people in the theatre world. Over lunch, Patrick attempts suicide by repeatedly stabbing the veins in his arms with a penknife, but manages, before swooning, to murmur the name of a wacky heiress he knows who is looking for something to spend her money on. The heiress (Beth Austin) turns out to be looking for a good man as well as a good cause, and strikes up a relationship with Himmer's mad father, Jacob (Edward Atienza), an erstwhile poet who lives in the past and likes to play with toy trains. In the second act, the heiress has endowed the hospital where an AIDS-specialist friend of Samantha's works with so much money that an entire room has been made over to Himmer and his friends and turned into a theatre. In the last scene, we see Himmer's mother's play performed, knowing that at the end of it Himmer intends to commit suicide by drinking poison. We are scarcely surprised when the wrong person drinks from the tainted vessel.

That Mr. Kondoleon is trying to say something profound is clear: He wants to use AIDS as a metaphor for life's tragic, unlooked-for disappointments. He also seeks to diminish the apocalyptic stature of AIDS, making it part of the background of contemporary life—like the burble of lunchtime conversation—in much the same way that the British playwright Christopher Hampton made murder and mayhem the polite background of his 1970 academic comedy "The Philanthropist." "Zero Positive" somewhat resembles "The Philanthropist" in its attempt to mix farcical situations with surreal premises, but Kondoleon lacks Hampton's verbal agility and his interest in ideas. This play is full of arch dialogue, one-liners that fall flat, precious imagery, and characters who speechify in complex periodic sentences without saying much of anything. Moreover, whereas the routine acts of terrorism and political violence alluded to in Hampton's play were an imaginative construct—something of the playwright's own making—Kondoleon here is drawing on (exploiting, really) a real-life circumstance and he hasn't the courage to explore it, or even engage it. His characters could be dying of anything. Nothing in the play addresses the subject of AIDS, imaginatively or dramatically.

The only eloquent moment in the production at the Public was a visual one, provided by the set and lighting designers (Adrianne Lobel and Natasha Katz, respectively): a nighttime view suggestive of storybook America which appeared between scenes, when the stage lights went down and the houses on Jacob's toy-train set lit up. Otherwise, "Zero Positive" was essentially a chance to see some fine actors trying to make the best of a bad situation: Mr. Pierce as one of those professionally witty New York homosexuals, Mr. Shalhoub as a parody heterosexual, Mr. Atienza as the unhinged father, Miss Austin as the perennially cheerful heiress, and Richard McMillan as a young man named Prentice, about whom we know no more than that he is breaking up with his boyfriend and that he collects religions. All of them struggled valiantly under difficult conditions, for these parts are grossly overwritten. With Mr. Elliott's help, the play's heavy-handedness was partially offset by consistent underacting. Only Miss Conroy, unable (as she often is) to keep from seeming actressy, failed to fit in with the ensemble.

Mr. Atienza and Mr. McMillan, who have worked extensively at the Shakespeare Festival in Stratford, Ontario, and Mr. Pierce, who played Laertes in Liviu Ciulei's "Hamlet" and Yasha in Peter Brook's "The Cherry Orchard," are skilled classical actors. It's sad to see them wasted, but heartening to know that they are there.

—MIMI KRAMER

•

SENTENCES, AND METAPHORS, WE HATED TO COME TO THE END OF

[*John C. Mills in the Lehighton (Pa.) Times News*]

We cannot pretend to answer this question without first taking a good, hard look at the society in which our schools are floating, and then thinking of this society as a rather sadly polluted sea in which our schools, as ships, are navigating under great difficulty, and finding it impossible to completely seal off all seepage from entering the classrooms on the backs of pupils corrupted by their environment and their inability to divorce themselves from envelopment in unsavory behavior and total indifference to academic achievement, which when considered thoroughly from all viewpoints leads to the conclusion that our schools are doing a commendable job of staying afloat as capably as they do in water not conducive to commendable sailing; in fact, it can be said with complete honesty that our teachers, our school administrators, and our boards of education are doing an exemplary job of doing what they are supposed to do if not what they should be empowered and encouraged to do, which is of course another ball game in a much bigger and more philosophically illuminated ball park, wherein no subject matter is ever taught in isolation of philosophic ideals and all students eventually construct for themselves wholesome patterns of life.

DANCING

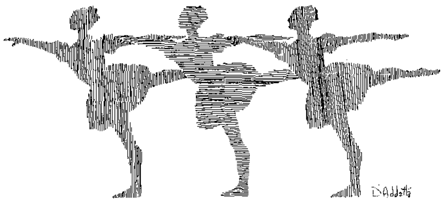
Vivamus Atque Amemus

THE dances Mark Morris makes are not about his own life or loves; all the same, it seems to me that he is dance's Catullus. The direct intensity of feeling and the elegant mastery of a variety of compositional forms remind me of that great bad-boy poet; and then so do Morris's ability to depict loves gay and straight without strain and without meanness, and his deep concern with what it is to be male and/or female. He can adopt the idioms of previous choreographers, making *hommages* and translations—as did Catullus with Sappho and the Alexandrian poets—without ever losing his openhearted immediacy. His sensibility is utterly of our day.

This May, he gave a week-long season at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. Though I'd seen Morris and some of his choreography before, the five works shown there were new to me, and it was this season that finally convinced me of his stature. And then, on May 31st, American Ballet Theatre gave the première of his "Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes"—a marvellous work, to music by Virgil Thomson. That he is one of the world's most entrancing dancers, that his work often demonstrates both remarkable structural ingenuity and an extraordinary range of style and drama, I had felt since first seeing him and his company, in 1984. Moreover, if anyone could tell in dance the overwhelming tale of self-castration, frenetic Cybelean worship, and sex change that is to be read in Catullus' Attis poem, it's Mark Morris: so "Deck of Cards," "Jealousy," "Lovey," and "Songs That Tell a Story" have shown in previous years—with their uncanny command of narrative, histrionics, travesty, and emotion. Still, I'd been uneasy about his musicality, which seemed at times—in the Beethoven "Minuet and Allegro in G," for example—weightedly and tightly step-for-note Disneyish in timing. Why is it that this season I didn't feel that once? I can explain it only by suggesting that the phrasing and accentuation to be found in the American modern-dance tradition, to which Morris so clearly belongs, can be as hard for a newcomer to adjust to as the off-the-beat exaggerated legato characteristic of much Soviet ballet. The coursing rhythm and the full-bodied tone that mark the dancing of Morris and his colleagues are descended primarily from Paul Taylor—and thus take their place in the genealogy that leads back to Isadora. Morris is the heir who restores the family fortunes. With almost everything he showed this May, he had me hovering between laughter and tears, shock and wonder. In him, American modern dance recaptures its youth.

"One Charming Night" is Morris's variation on the subversive erotic fantasy of Romanticism. The ballet "La Sylphide," in which the sylph of the hero's dreams enters his waking life, was a sex reversal of the scenario of Charles Nodier's (pre-Du Maurier) novel "Trilby," in which a male sprite haunts and possesses a Scotswoman. But while the changes that have been rung in dance on the theme of "La Sylphide" are beyond number, few of them have gone back to the "Trilby" idea of a woman haunted and excited by a male apparition; the most celebrated such example is Fokine's "Le Spectre de la Rose." In "One Charming Night," Morris is no androgynous rose-ghost; the frisson of the piece is that he's a vampire in cleric's clothing. No man has made this kind of demonic-fascinator role for himself since Jules Perrot in the eighteen-forties. It's just a duet, and it never takes itself too solemnly: Morris enjoys the absurdity of melodrama, and yet he makes it persuasive. We see first a girl (Teri Weksler) waiting, yearning feverishly, restless with desire; the spook (Morris) arrives; he enchants and possesses her; and it is not, after all, a dream—he carries her off.

But that's only the surface of it. The real twist lies in Morris's treatment not of male and female but of the music. He uses four Purcell vocal pieces, and I relished the first stages of the story while the countertenor Drew Minter sang—beautifully—"Be Welcome, Then, Great Sir," "One Charming Night," and "Hark! The Ech'ing Air." There's a sensuous elegance in the dance that Morris conjures right out of the music. The seduction's climax, however, is set to the longest of the Purcell works: a recitative, aria, and finale. And as this started, with the words "Lord, what is Man, lost Man, that thou shouldst be so mindful of him?," I was suddenly torn two ways, for it is music I've loved since my religious teens.



Torn, but held. Who would not be astounded by the strength of Morris's gesture as, standing behind Weksler, he runs his hands down her torso? Or by the sensual snarl with which he plants the love bite on her neck? One doesn't see physical acting of this calibre in Dracula movies or plays. Or such good comedy: he is the most fleshy and lewd and unctuous of fiends. His voluptuous power and mock solemnity, the woman's giddy fluctuations of emotion—we're shown these in a seamless flow of mime and dance. And it is Weksler's performance, blunt and abandoned, especially in the way she grows enfeebled by her own passion, that makes the piece so alarmingly real. Yet, meanwhile, the words sang on of how "the Son of God forsook His glory, His abode, to become a poor tormented man." When the bitten Weksler dances in new unity and rapture with Morris, it's to Purcell's repeated "Hallelujah"s.

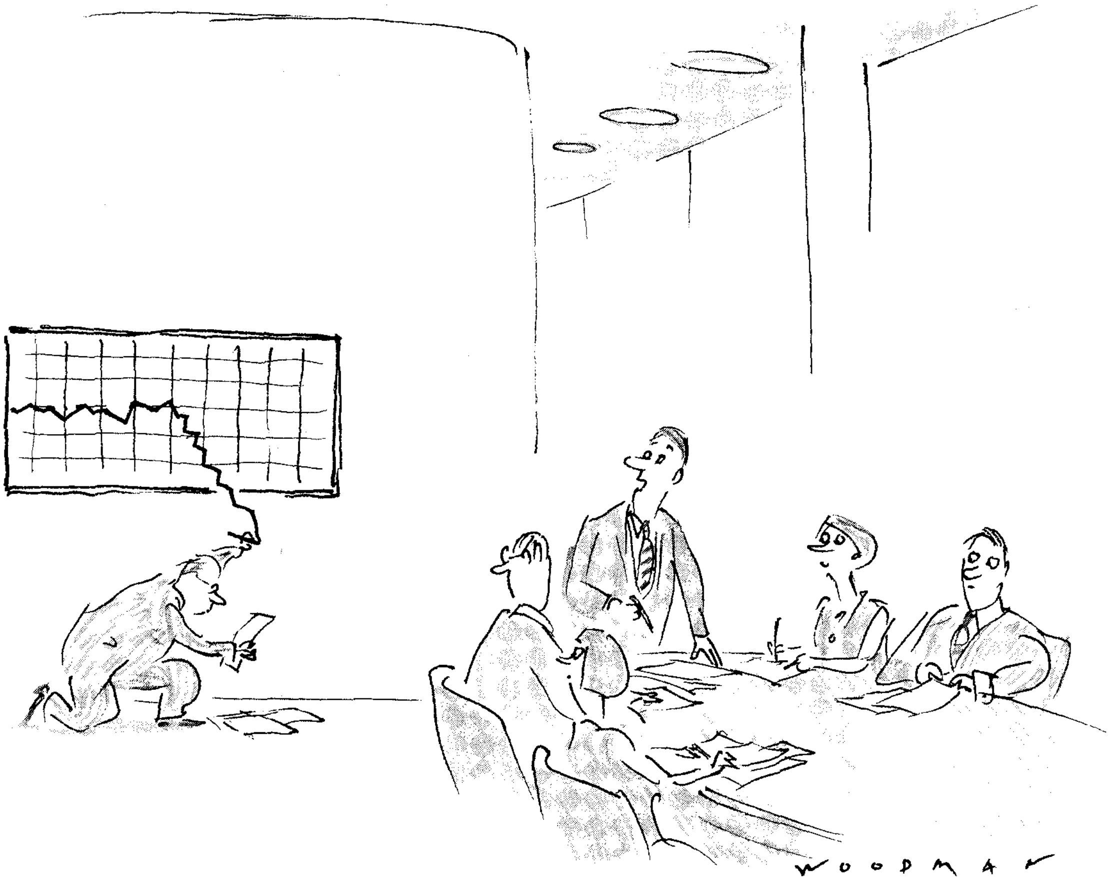
Seeing the piece a second time, I found myself seduced utterly; and the use of the music no longer seemed impious. Morris doesn't ignore the words; they're the sermon he himself preaches to the girl, the deluding message this Elmer Gantry uses to take final possession of his already captive audience. Feelings both religious and erotic are confused in her affliction. "One Charming Night" lasts just fifteen minutes, but—like the "Stabat Mater" Moses Pendleton made for Pilobolus in 1983—it's a horrifying little vignette of the psychopathology of religion. And sharply, gleefully told: I blame none of those who chortle in watching it.

I see why they laugh happily during "New Love Song Waltzes," too. So deft is the timing of Morris's choreography in this lush, extravagant 1982 work for ten dancers that the tone is always pithy and light. It fills the Brooklyn Academy stage handsomely: hard to imagine that it was ever performed in the much smaller space of Dance Theatre Workshop. Here, again, Morris shows audacity in his choice of music—the Brahms "Neue Liebeslieder," which many consider to be Balanchine music. As it happens, "New Love Song Waltzes" reminds me a good deal of Taylor's "Esplanade"—which dared to commit a parallel sin, by using the "Concerto Barocco" music—and, in particular, of its fourth movement, with its series of loving couples, the women hanging fondly around their male partners' necks. One watches both works with an unclouded brow and a full heart.

One could watch "New Love Song Waltzes" with a full brain, too. It's a work whose references range back through the colloquial look of apparent improvisation used by Twyla Tharp in the seventies, by way of Isadora, to old Greek chain dances; and it presents its dancers' numerous ripe, amorous encounters with vigor and intricacy: one could analyze its workings as those of a finely wrought drama. But it took me back to that state of innocently mystified admiration which one experiences less and less frequently as one follows any art form more. Within the first minute, it has taken from its music a sense of love's grip; love is the mesh in which all the characters are caught. "New Love Song Waltzes" doesn't try to give us a world of the nineteenth-century waltz and of Romantic expression, as does Balanchine's "Liebeslieder Walzer;" its treatment of the music is of and about our time, and part of Morris's skill is that this never looks anachronistic. Male couples, female couples, male-female couples: the ease with which Morris sets these alongside each other without making any issue of gender is quintessentially eighties (datable even as *early* eighties, but not dated). And it fits right in to the use of male and female voices in Brahms' score. Morris's subtlest feat in "New Love Song Waltzes," however, is the way he blends love's sincerity with love's transience. We see dancer after dancer moving from one partner's arms to another's; but the work isn't flippant, nor is it a study of promiscuity. Men and women, held rather by tender emotion and physical desire (and by their need for those things) than by any specific relationship—we're shown this in all its human truth.

In his Mozart "Fugue and Fantasy" Morris pays his dues to the Denishawn-Humphrey tradition of music visualization, and he handles simultaneously a quite different, contemporary choreographic idiom, in which obsessive gestural behavior is ordered in accumulating choreographic patterns. He's not the first to put this kind of movement—standing, sitting, slapping oneself, waggling feet above the floor—to an eighteenth-century fugue; but has anyone else made so persuasive and firm a picture of racked, driven, self-tormenting, getting-nowhere gestures? And who else save Balanchine can have illustrated a musical fugue so judiciously? Time and again, especially with those waggling feet (which match a trill in the music), a touch of comedy suddenly slices through the bleak, schematic ensemble. Here Morris is like the Mozart who used dramatic situations as opportunities for compositional virtuosity—as in the developments of sonata form found in the sextets of "Figaro" and "Don Giovanni." Equally Mozartian is the work's second, Fantasy section, an exercise in sustained melodramatic tension. Although we can laugh at each of its sudden, individual gestures—among the most prominently recycled motifs are a collapse to the floor, a hand clasped to the throat, a fall backward into another dancer's arms—and although we can smile at how all concerned fix their eyes on the Offstage Object, the inexorable mechanics of the whole keep us attentive, and even aghast.

Having praised these pieces, I must say I just don't get another new work by Morris, "Sonata for Clarinet and Piano," to Poulenc. From its opening, in which Morris himself is held aloft, as if on a rostrum, by a cluster of co-



"Thank you, Bentley. We get the picture."

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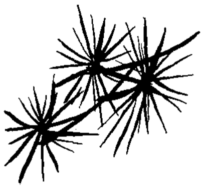
dancers, who then promptly bear him offstage, the work is often entertaining; it's always clearly and smartly arranged. He deliberately here supplies a choreographic framework that *doesn't* parallel that of the music. But what he intended, with his lined-up corps de ballet and his own half-teacher, half-ringmaster role, eluded me both times I saw it.

The Brooklyn program ended with yet another new work—"Strict Songs," to music composed by Lou Harrison and based on Hopi chants—which shows us a quite other Morris. Here he has opened his heart to the rapt mysteries of the music, showing a tribe of men and women at ease with themselves and with nature. Imagery of ritual and biology, leaping animals and undulating flora: all of it luminous, and all of it borne on the tides of the music and then away into nowhere.



For "Drink to Me Only," at A.B.T., Morris has taken thirteen of the piano études that Virgil Thomson composed in the forties and fifties. (Yes, Virgil, another piano ballet.) The variety of tempo and tone and the rhythmic clarity of these pieces—eloquently played by Michael Boriskin—make them a perfect dance score. In the last étude to be played, "Tenor Lead," Thomson introduces the tune from which the ballet takes its title; first we hear it disguised, then played in full. Thus the ballet leads us through a range of mood into the noble melody itself, much as Stravinsky's "Le Baiser de la Fée" travels into its culminating Tchaikovsky song, "None but the Lonely Heart."

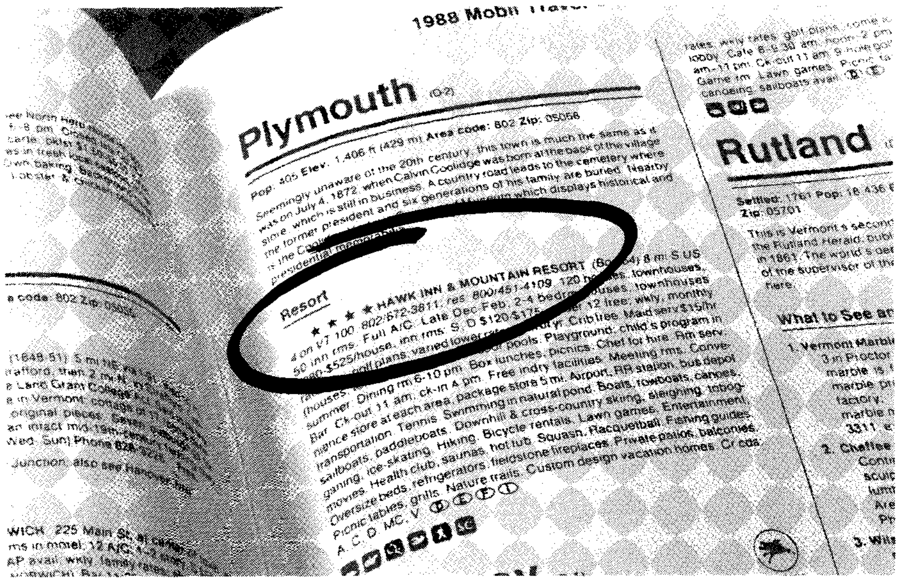
Although "Drink to Me Only" will always be the definitive setting of Ben Jonson's moving lyrics "To Celia," we don't know who composed it. (The first published version dates from the early eighteenth century.) The words, with their glowing expression of love's ardor ("Or leave a kiss but in the cup And I'll not look for wine"), led me to expect from Morris a love drama, a sequel to "New Love Song Waltzes;" and that's what the work's opening image—a woman borne across the stage by a man, held horizontally high above his head, and then slowly lowered into his arms—also suggests. But "Drink to Me Only" does not depict love or personal relationships, though it has plenty of partnering and is always affectionate. It is a group epithalamium; it is also the piece that no one choreographed for New York City Ballet's American Music Festival—a work sheerly about its music, about its dancers, and about ballet.

It honors basic facts about its score. The piano is not only heard; it's also placed at the center of the Met stage—the dancing occurs in front of it. The music is an array of keyboard exercises (one is called "For the Weaker Fingers"), and Morris gives us dance études—ordered with a stylistic harmony, a structural coherence, and a delicacy of rhythm that place this ballet a world away from the monotonous bombast of Harald Lander's famous classroom ballet "Études." And the thirteen musical numbers are so chosen and ordered that it's possible, and entertaining, to hear them as something they're not—variations on the original English song. At any rate, I'm led to sniff out accidental rhythmic and melodic connections between the pieces by the choreography, which shows us obvious dance motifs (such as demiplié in fifth position; arms en couronne but with wrists crossed and hands gently loose; fourth position held, à la Cunningham; the arabesque taken on one knee and one hand), combinations of them, variations on them. Partnering études, footwork études, male études, female études—the ballet's concern with academic dance language is integral to it, and the classroom is never far away. In one sequence, three women perform repeated exercises of fast relevés-passés and échappés; and one woman is a beat ahead of the others. Is that a mistake? They all pause for a split second, and start again; she's still that same beat ahead. The rapidity of the start-freeze-start timing is clever; the mood is simply very sweet.

Morris handles the vocabulary of ballet with assurance, deliberately employing the accent used in Twyla Tharp's choreography for the same company. There's the odd touch of casual grace and unforced wit that we know as Tharpian; and in the first three performances of the ballet there was Baryshnikov, seen as both soloist and colleague, one of a team and *primus inter pares*, to help point out the connection. (As in several Tharp works, there are clothes by Santo Loquasto—the latest of his elegant stylizations of dance practicewear—in creamy white, with high-waisted trousers for the men, skirts over knee-length tights for the women, and light, baggy long-sleeved jerseys for all.) "Drink to Me Only" honors Tharp's choreography; with those fourth positions, it also honors Cunningham's. Principally, it honors American Ballet Theatre and its unparalleled record in the eighties for commissioning work by appropriate modern-dance choreographers. And it is a piece that only Morris could have made; while it distinguishes male and female ballet steps (the women are on pointe; the men have double tours en l'air), it cultivates the gray area in between. Men and women partner each other (Carld Jonassaint is spun by Susan Jaffe in finger-turns). Both sexes leap heroically; both do fast little échappés and emboîté walks, and the men never seem effeminate. The effect isn't one of androgyny; it heightens the ballet's variety.

"Drink to Me Only" is full of incidentally felicitous strokes. For the rippling music of "For the Weaker Fingers," Morris makes dances where almost every step is en tournant: a gently whirling stream of dancers passing this way and that over the stage. Baryshnikov's matchless rhythm is displayed beautifully in the tango, "Parallel Chords," which he dances first alone, then with Robert Hill, and finally in a trio with Julio Bocca: in the solo that begins this, the command with which repeatedly he comes out of multiple pirouettes into développé à la seconde and back in again is a particular thrill. Bocca and Hill emerge with almost as much distinction (they join him in the same step), and all the women show relaxation within finesse. "Drink to Me Only" is modest; it doesn't call attention to any of its stars or to its choreographer's mastery. Several of the dancers I've named were replaced by others during this first run of performances, yet I found more to love in it at each viewing. It makes its dancers look good—blithe and honest and assured. Mark Morris goes in September to Brussels, where his own dance company will become resident at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie for three years. I hope that "Drink to Me Only" stays in A.B.T.'s repertory for America to remember him by.

—ALASTAIR MACAULAY



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SOONER or later, it gets to all of us. In an airport departure lounge at six in the morning, or in the atrium coffee shop of a Midwestern Hyatt, or on a weekend afternoon at the shopping mall, wandering through the crowds until the kids run out of money at the video arcade—in, that is, any one of those countless situations that make us feel lonely, defenseless, bored, a little out of it—we'll find ourselves possessed by the urge to read a piece of trash. This isn't an uncomplicated impulse. As we scan the shelves for something to help us through the long flight, the solitary night, or the interminable Sunday at home, we're prey to strange desires: to give in to the brain death we feel creeping up on us; to try something *new*, even if we're pretty sure it won't be good for us; to read what we think everyone else is reading, to enjoy ourselves in what we imagine to be a communal, unself-conscious way. (If we weren't feeling so lethargic, we'd go out and play softball.) And so, faced with the massive, looming displays of Robert Ludlum's "The Icarus Agenda" (Random House; $19.95) and Jackie Collins' "Rock Star" (Simon & Schuster; $19.95), we're powerless: we just say yes.

And it's all downhill from there. When it comes to those novels that dwell in the higher reaches of the best-seller list, where the air is thin and the books are fat, the moment of purchase represents the peak of the reader's experience. When the plastic is on the counter and there's no turning back, and the jacket copy teases our imaginations with promises of mindless, disreputable fun, we get a kind of rush: we're doing something stupid, we're paying a lot of money for it, and we don't care. What we're looking for, in our manic state, isn't just fun but megafun—overdoses of junky entertainment. But once we've actually started reading, the excitement begins to ebb. The novels aren't just awful; they're awful in exactly the same way that the airport lounge and the efficient hotel and the cheery shopping center are. We've bought into something that we thought would be invigorating, full of spirit and crude energy, and now we're depressed. It's the same feeling we get, year after year, while watching the Super Bowl or the Oscars: suckered again.

"Will the gentleman want the saumon poché with or without his initials?"

As is true of all heavily promoted media events, sheer size probably has a lot to do with why these books aren't more entertaining. "The Icarus Agenda" is supposed to be a thriller—but it's six hundred and seventy-seven pages long. A writer who could maintain a high level of suspense at that length would have to be considered a kind of narrative genius. Ludlum doesn't qualify. He fills up pages by the simple expedient of not sticking to any story line for very long. He builds up a little tension, resolves it in a gaudy shootout, then lumbers on to something else: we seem to get a new set of villains every hundred pages or so, and the story climaxes about six times. Collins (who's also a fan of multiple climaxes) is a shade more economical: "Rock Star" expires after a mere five hundred and eleven pages. Her trick is to keep shuttling among three separate heroes: a macho British singer/guitarist named Kris Phoenix, a black soul singer named Bobby Mondella, and Rafealla, a beautiful girl of mixed black and white ancestry who specializes in some kind of Brazilian-flavored easy-listening music. They all have their triumphs and setbacks, they're all exploited by managers and record companies, they all end up "superstars." Why do we need all three of them, then? It's a matter of volume, of *size*—the only formal criterion for this kind of best-seller writing. Size is something Jackie Collins knows a lot about, as we can see in this description of Kris Phoenix's encounter with "a beautiful, if somewhat older, French ex-movie star":

> He [Phoenix] was naked, everything on show, and why not?—he certainly had nothing to hide.
>
> "Beeg!" she exclaimed admiringly, which of course made him even bigger.

We get the feeling, reading these novels, that we're meant to respond in the same way. Yes, they *are* awfully big—though the prospect of their becoming "even bigger" may not seem all that exciting to us.

In fact, the bigness of these novels is

wholly artificial—prosthetic. As storytelling, they're not very potent, because they're basically children's books. Ludlum's virile, virtuous hero, Evan Kendrick, is a businessman turned congressman who volunteers to go undercover for the C.I.A. to help resolve a hostage crisis in the Middle East, returns to Washington and takes on various high-level conspirators, goes back to the Middle East to destroy a satanic international arms dealer, and winds up a Vice-Presidential candidate and the heir apparent to the White House. This is the sort of fantasy that American boys have to make do with before they discover sex. (The romance in Ludlum's books is chaste and monogamous, in the forties style: a beautiful, plucky woman stands by the hero through all his exploits and falls grudgingly in love with him.) There isn't a trace of wit in Ludlum's fantasies: this book could only have been written by a man who watches "North by Northwest" and admires its realism. The action is meant to leave us breathless, but it's mostly the characters who seem to be gasping for air, as they shout and splutter and pop their eyes in amazement. In the endless, repetitive dialogue passages, Ludlum italicizes promiscuously: his characters say "My *God!*" in response to all but the most innocuous comments, and "*What?*" even more frequently (at least fifty times, by actual count). This is how one of his characters reacts to a piece of particularly bad news: " 'Oh, *Jesus*, Paddy! . . . They *found* him! They found *Phil!* He was down under the boilers in the basement. Good *Christ*, Paddy! They say his *throat* was cut! Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, he's *dead*, Paddy!' " In the recent miniseries of Ludlum's "The Bourne Identity," every one of the actors—Richard Chamberlain, Jaclyn Smith, Anthony Quayle, Donald Moffat, and even Denholm Elliott—delivered his lines like Ernest Borgnine.

Jackie Collins' fantasies are of the show-biz variety. The child inside her doesn't imagine ruling the world, as Ludlum's Boy Scouts do: she'd rather be someone who gets to sing "If I Ruled the World" in the final hours of the Jerry Lewis Telethon. Her books are straightforward success-and-failure stories with naughty bits thrown in: her fantasies go down a little more easily than Ludlum's only because the significance her characters aspire to is so blatantly ludicrous. And her characters go down very readily indeed. The blunt, no-nonsense sex scenes are funny at first, but even they become tedious. Every encounter is a quickie; Collins gets in and out of these passages with incredible speed, sometimes pausing long enough to measure the relevant anatomical features, never slowing down to savor a sensuous detail. The earth does not move. ("Together they sank to the floor. . . . Somehow she knew exactly what would please him, while he anticipated her every need." That seems just a bit perfunctory. Whatever these lovers are doing for each other, nobody's doing much for us.) Eventually, we realize that Collins' wised-up tone is just a cover for an attitude that's actually rather prim: it comes as no surprise when all the superstars find true love in the end. The writer seems to be saving herself for those moments—there are many of them—when she needs to remind us how huge, how colossally important, her characters are, as in this passage about Kris Phoenix's group, the Wild Ones:

> Worldwide fame.
> American fame.
> Success.
> Adulation.
> Yeah, they had it all now. Everything he'd always dreamed of. And it was a kick. . . .
> The Wild Ones.
> Supergroup.

Every few pages, Collins goes into one of these spasms of panting, give-it-to-me-now prose about her characters' celebrity, and it's these passages that give "Rock Star" its distinctively swollen, engorged quality—that blow it up to true superstar proportions.

"The Icarus Agenda" and "Rock Star" are, if nothing else, useful reminders of a truth that's often stated but not always, in times of crisis, fully believed: Size isn't everything. Technique counts for a little something, too, and that's where these books let us down. They just pound away monotonously, until we can't even fake a response anymore—we feel half dead. Maybe the reason Ludlum and Collins, like many other megawriters, are so shockingly innocent of basic storytelling technique after all these years—Collins has written twelve novels, Ludlum fourteen—is that they started writing "best-sellers" right away. They didn't come up through the

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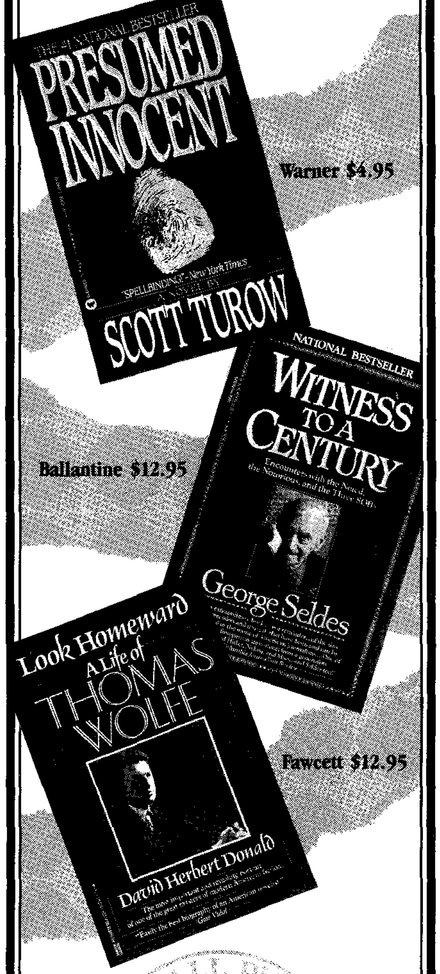

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ranks of pop novelists, the way writers like Stephen King, Isaac Asimov, Dick Francis, Elmore Leonard, Louis L'Amour, P. D. James, John D. MacDonald, Danielle Steel, and Len Deighton did; they never had to crank out short, swift, exciting genre books for meagre advances. Genre writers *have* to tell their stories briskly—they're not being paid enough to allow them to linger—and they have to be clever, too, if they want to distinguish themselves from the thousands of others working their territory. The irony is that those lucky genre technicians who are finally anointed as "breakout" writers, and are given fat contracts to write books that will appeal to a wider audience, frequently end up producing bloated, formless works in which their real virtues as storytellers are diluted. Even in these novels, though, some evidence of skill usually persists. Elmore Leonard, for instance, hasn't written a really first-rate thriller in quite a while, yet his books are still readable. There's just enough craft to keep us turning the pages (albeit less urgently than we did with earlier books like "Split Images" and "City Primeval: High Noon in Detroit").

Ludlum's and Collins' books are supposed to be real page-turners, too—but only if you're willing to lug them outdoors and wait for a nice breeze to come up. (That must be why so many people take these novels to the beach, where you can doze off on page 200 and wake up, feeling refreshed and magically unburdened, on page 450.) These writers never had any narrative skills to lose: their earliest books are nearly as padded and inert as their latest behemoths—maybe a little smaller and marginally livelier, like chubby kids who haven't yet grown into their heaving, sweaty adulthood. In books like Ludlum's "The Matlock Paper" (1973) and Collins' "The World Is Full of Married Men" (1968) we can feel the authors drooling over our disposable income already, nibbling and noshing until they're big enough to gorge themselves with impunity.

Life is hard enough without having Robert Ludlum or Jackie Collins munching on our charge accounts and our consciousness. All we ever wanted, in the desperate, thrill-hungry state in which we turned to "The Icarus Agenda" and "Rock Star," was some relief from the huge, greedy, alienating stuff that surrounds us every day, and all we got was more of the same. We're better off sticking to our own daydreams, which even at their feeblest are more vivid than these calculated fantasies—or to the low-level depression we started out with (which is *cheap* entertainment, at least). We'd do better, for that matter, to take our doses of trash in different forms entirely—to skip the big dumb novels and wait for the movies or the miniseries instead. Filmed junk is almost invariably less debilitating than written junk, partly because the shapeless, sprawling best-seller narratives have to be streamlined, and partly because movies and miniseries can take us, to some extent, beyond the stifling confines of the writer's imagination. In the TV version of "The Bourne Identity" or the staggeringly funny miniseries of Collins' "Hollywood Wives" that aired a couple of years ago, there are incidental pleasures that the authors' tinny, limited voices can't provide: lavish sets, exotic locations, exuberantly hammy performances, and a dazzling parade of nips, tucks, nose jobs, breast implants, face-lifts, and hair weaves. Although it doesn't always work out that way, in movies and TV big bucks can sometimes be put to good use: more money can buy a better director, more skillful or more attractive stars, the luxury of filming outside the studio. Best of all, we can loll around the TV set with friends and family or squash ourselves into the weary mid-afternoon crowd in the mall cinema and really feel, for a while, that we're a part of something, that our shared response—the lame cracks and the exaggerated yawns and the snorts of derision with which we distance ourselves from what we're watching—is more important than the manufactured excitement on the screen. Trash, like many guilty pleasures, is nothing to experience in solitude; it's no fun to hoot alone.

—TERRENCE RAFFERTY

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

ZENO WAS HERE, by Jan Mark (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $17.95). Forget that this is a novel about being a character in a novel; what it is really is a satisfying, heartrending, laugh-out-loud love story. Slightly too clever for its own good, it is about people who aren't: they are delightfully and passionately clever, in the British sense meaning intelligent and well educated. John McEvoy is—as his author has been—a teacher; his best friend is a successful widowed novelist, Geneva; and his wife, largely with unwarranted jealousy, is mad. When he receives an autobiography that is dressed in the merest fig leaf of fiction from a weekend's romantic partner of his youth, he knows that he must hide it from his wife and that he must find out how he figures in it. Geneva lambastes the stories of a visiting friend. The friend, Ruth Prochak, is a poet and a lecturer in biochemistry; she has oysterlike eyes that "turn her most cursory glance into a mesmeric gaze," and McEvoy falls in love with her. It is the lush language of wit rather than comic antics that brings laughter here, and even minor characters, like Geneva's blissful teen-age daughters, snap from the page like pop-ups. That they do so is the reader's great pleasure.

MEN IN TROUBLE, by Sarah Payne Stuart (Harper & Row; $15.95). In this author's competent début, the wry Lizzie Reade looks back on her coming-of-age, in the late sixties, beginning with public school in the Waspy town of Concord, Massachusetts, where "the rich were careful not to be too comfortable and had the shabbiest houses," and she and her brothers called their parents "the parents." Lizzie has been spared her mother's manic-depressive genes, but she spends her Radcliffe years obsessed with the breakdowns and recoveries of her brother Harry, who, when he isn't in the hospital, majors in philosophy at Harvard and plays jazz brilliantly in a Cambridge bar. Lizzie tries, with varying degrees of success, to care for Harry, but she doesn't treat herself very well. She almost never goes to class, pops speed to lose weight, and doesn't feel good about her own life unless Harry is stable. Because the story is told as recollection, it sometimes lacks immediacy, but, to Ms. Stuart's credit, Lizzie's self-realizations are engaging and believable, and the book is over almost before our curiosity about her is satisfied.

NOTE: "Believe Them," a collection of stories by Mary Robison, has been published by Knopf ($15.95). Many

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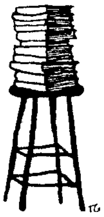

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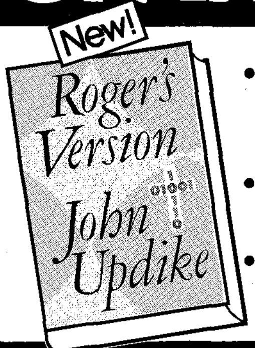

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GENERAL

THOSE TERRIBLE CARPETBAGGERS, by Richard Nelson Current (Oxford; $24.95). The noted historian has found an original and persuasive way to reconsider the Reconstruction era: he has intertwined biographies of ten Northerners who, by different routes, arrived in the South after the Civil War and became officeholders and leaders of their states' Republican Parties. The work is wonderfully specific, portraying its characters as they confront both general problems (the former Confederate states lacked public-school systems) and local ones (Florida landowners had been allowed to assess their own property for tax purposes, and rated it as cheap as eighty cents an acre). In general, these men were educated and comparatively well-to-do; and, though some were more forward-looking than others (Willard Warner, an Ohioan who served as a senator from Alabama, would have liked to enfranchise women as well as blacks), all were hopeful about nineteenth-century America.

ELEPHANT MEMORIES: THIRTEEN YEARS IN THE LIFE OF AN ELEPHANT FAMILY, by Cynthia Moss (Morrow; $22.95). The record of a study of a group of elephant families in the Amboseli National Park, in Kenya. The author, an American research specialist in animal behavior, tabulated and cross-referenced the families (groups of three or four related elephants, presided over by a matriarch) and kept them under close scrutiny (usually from a Land-Rover). Her findings are extremely interesting: about elephant love and breeding; about elephant family attachments, which seem to survive death; about the fabled "elephant graveyards," which she says are mythical; about the boisterous "greeting ceremonies" that occur when groups of elephants who know each other meet; and about the recent, and startling, discoveries in elephant communication by infrasound.

DEAD MAN'S CHEST: TRAVELS AFTER ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON, by Nicholas Rankin (Faber & Faber; $25). The author had the bold idea of tracking Robert Louis Stevenson through his life and career at a hundred-year remove, and this enchanting book is the result. Starting in Edinburgh, where Stevenson, the only son of a wealthy and domineering lighthouse engineer, grew up, Mr. Rankin follows his man through the early years of bohemianism in France, and on to California, where he married Fanny Osborne, whom he had met and fallen in love with in Paris. The trail leads to Hawaii, and the then pristine South Sea Islands, which enthralled Stevenson and, in his words, "touched a virginity of sense," and where, on Samoa, he built his now famous home, Vailima. Mr. Rankin accompanies his itinerary with a trenchant commentary on Stevenson's prodigious achievement, and reviews the fluctuations of his literary standing, from the time when he was sniffily dismissed as a writer of boys' books to a later day, when Jorge Luis Borges could say, "If you don't like Stevenson, there must be something wrong with you."

FLIGHTS OF PASSAGE: REFLECTIONS OF A WORLD WAR II AVIATOR, by Samuel Hynes (Frederic C. Beil & Naval Institute Press; $16.95). The subtitle of this memoir is misleading; it is a fairly straightforward narrative of an eighteen-year-old Minnesota boy's year as a cadet in training, his initiation into the Marines in 1944, and his subsequent career as a bomber pilot in the South Pacific. It tells us how a youth coming abruptly out of an ordinary, unclouded Middle Western boyhood must learn in a short time about sex, drinking, male friendship, the military mind, and death. Mr. Hynes is a skillful, often funny writer; he has found in this book's recital of the particulars of one boy's experience something of relevance to our understanding of men at war.

NOTE: "Paris Notebooks: Essays & Reviews," by Mavis Gallant, has been published by Random House ($17.95). Much of the contents first appeared here.

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—*Knoxville (Tenn.) News-Sentinel.*

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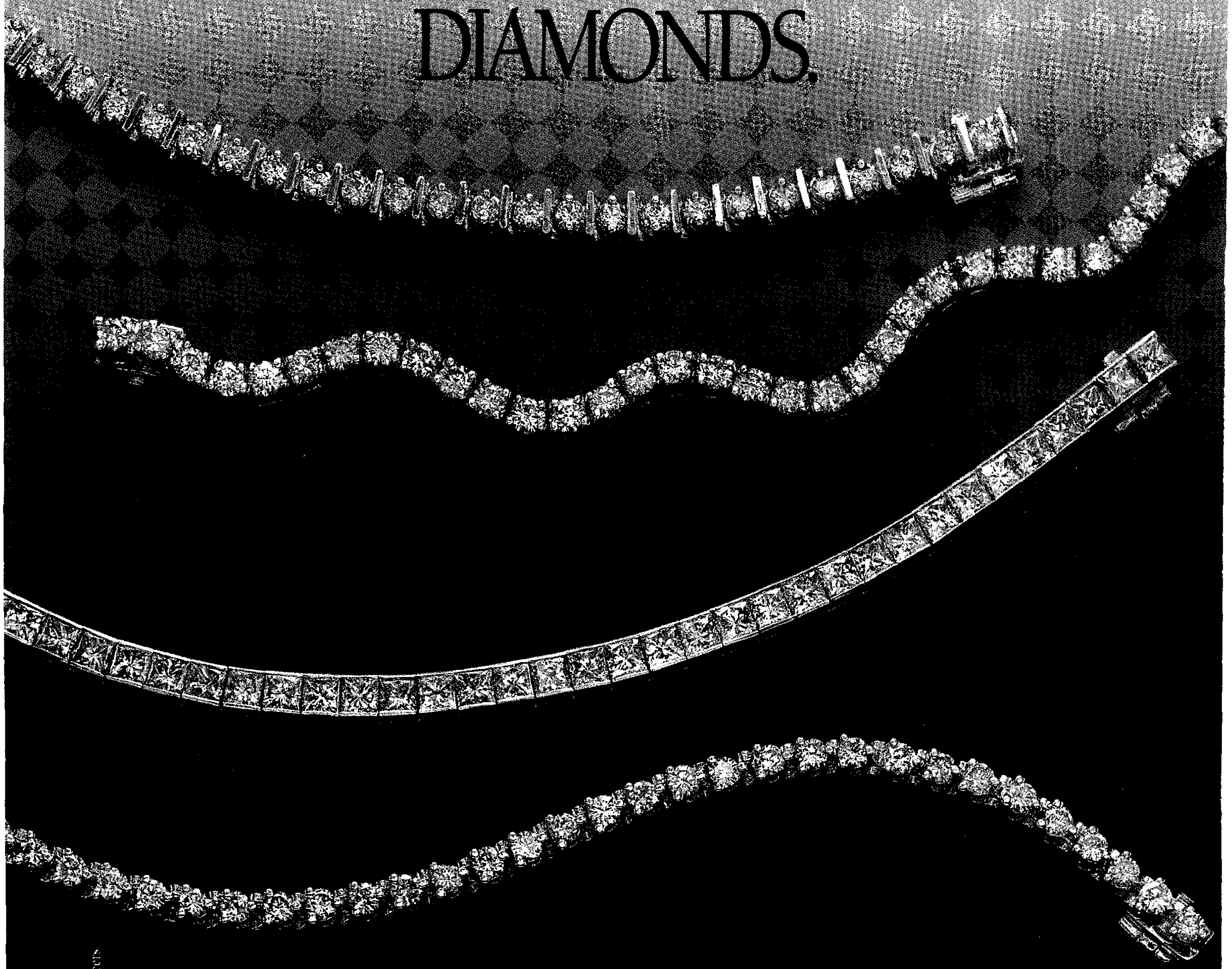

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